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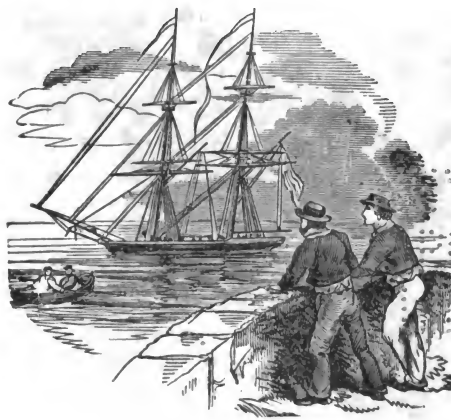
THE

AMERICAN CRUISER'S OWN BOOK.

By CAPT. GEO. LITTLE,

AUTHOR OF LIFE ON THE OCEAN.



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INTRODUCTION.

In presenting this work to the public, an apology may be due to them from the Author, for intruding again so soon upon their notice. There are, however, two considerations which have induced him: the first is the rapid sale and extensive circulation of his "Life on the Ocean"—and the second, that he believes there is no work extant which describes correctly the operations of private and armed vessels of war connected with American history. The Author was personally connected with many of the scenes that are herein described, and therefore can answer for their veracity. There is a part of them, however, for which he is indebted to verbal statements, and what he could glean from the log book of the Cruiser. He claims no farther merit for this work than that which a plain and unvarnished description of nautical life and naval warfare, founded on truth, as deduced from real life, entitles him to. He has, however, endeavored to make this work beneficial to his brother tars, by conveying lessons of instruction, that they may avoid those rocks and shoals upon which so many sons of the Ocean have been wrecked and cast away. And now, in conclusion, the Author may be permitted to observe, that he hopes the veil of charity will be thrown over any errors or imperfections that may occur in this work, and that they will be attributed either to his peculiar affliction, or to the errors of his head, and not those of his heart.

THE AUTHOR.

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THE AMERICAN CRUISER.

CHAPTER I.

EXCITEMENT IN NEW YORK IN 1812.

In the autumn of 1812 (a period that will long be remembered in the annals of American history,) the city of New York presented a universal scene of excitement and commotion: every square, avenue, street, lane and alley, from the highest location, where may yet be seen the splendid mansion of the wealthy merchant, and where the luxurious man of fortune drives his liveried equipage, to the lowliest retreats of the laboring citizens, gave evidence of a profound sensation. A stranger might have seen the Park crowded with anxious faces. All, men, women, and children, partook of the general feeling of suspense and tumult consequent upon the unusual position which the country sustained. In the most degraded haunts of squalid mendicity and the obscure sections where misery

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and poverty, (though less vicious,) dwell, the excitement was at its height. As you approached the extreme east and north parts of the city, you might have seen numerous artisans busily engaged in constructing both public and private armed vessels of war, and the merry and cheering sound of the axe, saw and hammer, saluted the ear until its sounds died away in the distance; and then bending your way towards Cherry and Water streets, you might have beheld numerous crowds of seamen, while at every corner was hung out the American ensign, indicating places of rendezvous, and from almost every house might be heard sounds of music, the merry dance and the jovial laugh: nor were the old tars alone. All then wore the costume of a sailor, for the recent successes of our navy and privateers on the ocean, over those who had hitherto been considered invincible masters of the deep, gave a brilliancy to the vocation of a sea life, in which all now seemed anxious to embark, either for the purpose of emolument or honor. Ranging along the course of the East and North Rivers, the eye met piers and quays, crowded with vessels of every description, whose high masts resembled the splendid panorama of a dense forest of trees; while the unruffled placidity of the stream exhibited on its bosom a magnificent vessel of war, or a privateer, the finest specimen of naval architecture in the world.

It was one of those clear and bland days in September, which so frequently marks an American autumn; the sun had declined far to the west, and

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the clouds wore a rich drapery of brown and yellow, which cast a shade of mellowed softness on the heavens, reflecting on the polished surface of the water a variety of images and forms which an inventive imagination might have personified into living existences, the whole corresponding to the universal quiet of the elements, strongly contrasting with the living, moving mass of human beings which then crowded the Battery. There stood a group, who by their conversation appeared to be merchants of the first class, discussing with great warmth the politics of the day, the merits of the war, and the relative strength and condition as well as the chance of success of the two contending parties. Another group, by their looks and conversation, seemed wrought up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by a recent victory of our navy; they fearlessly avowed that no doubt now remained of the Americans being able to cope with the British by sea as well as on the land. A third, no less sanguine but infinitely more calculating, had in prospect already swept the ocean of British cruisers, annihilated their armies, taken possession of Canada, and by their own valor and prowess acquired a fortune.

As this conversation was being carried on by the several parties mentioned, a crowd had gathered round two fine-looking seamen, who stood leaning against the rail or barrier of the Battery, and who had been circumstantially detailing all the incidents connected with a short but successful cruise in a privateer, while the

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gaping multitude, with mouth, eyes and ears opened, swallowed every word, receiving it as pure gospel truth. These men of the ocean were dressed with the entire costume of sailors; their whole rig wore the appearance of perfect cleanliness and studied neatness, the blue jacket and snow-white trousers, with plaited bosom shirt contrasting with a black silk handkerchief tied in a sailor's knot, the long ends flowing loosely in front, and the neat tarpaulin hat; these, together with their manly appearance and perfect sobriety, immediately inspired the belief that they were seamen of a higher class. The elder of the two appeared to be about thirty-five years of age, finely proportioned, stout, strong, with a broad chest, brawny limbs, and a face which was bronzed with the burning sun of the tropics, and a frame that seemed to defy the ravages of time, or the hardships and privations of an ocean life. The other, a handsome young man, who appeared to be about twenty-five years of age, whose high, bold forehead, piercing black eyes, faultless features, and manly bearing, impressed you at once with the character of chivalry and deeds of daring. When the narration was concluded, they both fixed a searching gaze upon a long, low, rakish-looking privateer, which lay off in the stream. After the practised eye of the two had scanned the Cruiser, from the water-line to the truck, the elder seaman, addressing his companion with apparent delight, observed:

"That is a noble craft; what a run! There is no drag under that counter. What an entrance! Look

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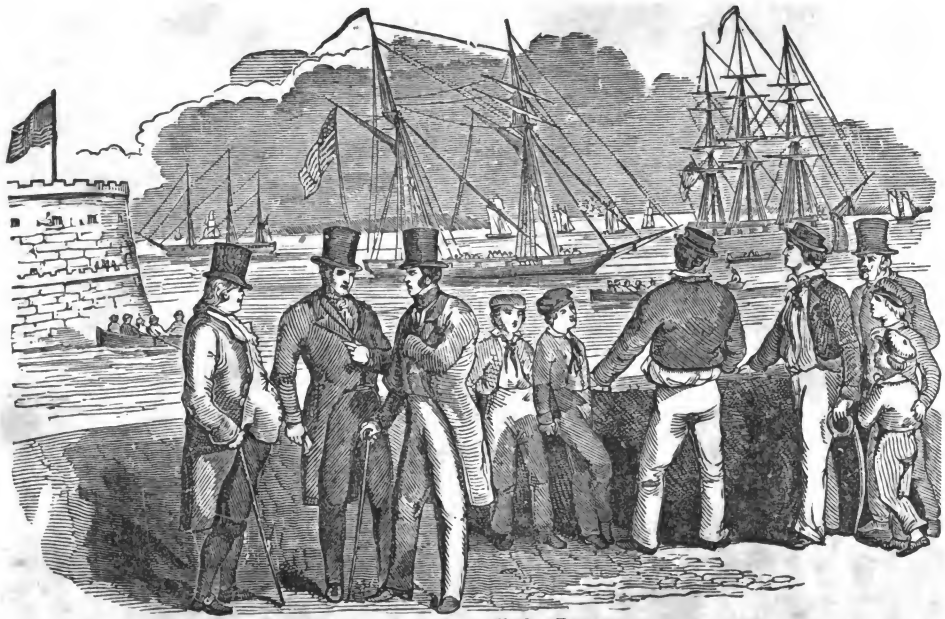

The Cruiser at Anchor off the Battery.

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at the luff of that bow: she breaks the water at the forward part of the forechains; what rakes she has to her masts, and that fore-yard is square enough for a thirty-two gun frigate; and there is canvass sufficient in that square-sail to dress a merchantman of her size with a full suit. What do you think of her, messmate?"

"Why," replied the young seaman, "your long experience and better judgment in the good or bad qualities of any craft, is a sufficient assurance for me; but, if I were to give an opinion of that vessel, it would be that she is a perfect model, and just the one for a cruiser. But what is she, what is her name?" continued the young seaman warmly.

"Why, have you been in York a fortnight and have not heard of that famous Cruiser, and her successful cruise!" replied the old seaman. "Why," continued he, "she captured a large English West Indiaman and two brigs: and what is better, the ship and one brig got in safe, and d'ye see, each share amounted to four hundred dollars, a pretty little sum, lad, for a forty days' cruise, especially as each able seaman was entitled to one share and a half; and now she is fitting out for another cruise. The articles are open, and, by the way, as she is off in the stream there, I suppose she will soon be off into blue water, and now, messmate, what do you think of a cruise in her?"

"Why," replied the other, "I like the looks of the craft, and as for the name, it has something ominous in it, and if she acquires half the renown of her name-

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sake, I should have no objection to your proposal; and I suppose there is no time to be lost: let us go to the rendezvous immediately and take a look at the articles, and if the officers' berths are not filled up, I have no doubt but that you might get the offer of boatswain, for I am sure there are few who are better suited to discharge that duty than yourself."

This conversation being finished, they walked off at a rapid pace toward the rendezvous, in Water-street, which they found without difficulty; for the successful cruise of the privateer became a matter of so much notoriety, that hundreds were anxiously waiting an opportunity to sign the articles; besides many old tars, there were what was at that time technically called highbinders, cookey boys, butcher boys, indomitables, &c. &c. &c. Those of my readers who are at all acquainted with the lower class of the population of New York at that period, will readily comprehend the very respectable characters of the rabble before-mentioned. It was not without some difficulty that our heroes forced an entrance through the crowd into the long room where there were several articles, upon the first of which was that of the Cruiser before-mentioned. The appearance of the two immediately caught the eye of the Lieutenant, and no marvel, for among the great number that were in and out of the rendezvous, none wore so high a bearing as these two seamen.

"Well, my lads," inquired the Lieutenant, "do you wish to take a cruise in the privateer? She is a fine craft, sails fast, and, what every sailor admires,

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she is remarkably lucky, as no doubt you have heard." The elder seaman being the spokesman, after a few preliminary inquiries and quaint hits, adjusting his morsel of Virginia, and disposing of a liberal quantity of the juice, asked the Lieutenant if there were any of the petty officers' berths open; to which the officer replied, that they were all filled up except the boatswain's, and two applications had been made for that berth; "but," continued he, "do you wish to go in that capacity?"

He replied in the affirmative.

"Well," continued the Lieutenant, "I like your appearance, and I think you have seen much service. How old are you?"

"Thirty-five."

"How long have you been to sea?"

"Twenty years," he replied rather gruffly, being somewhat piqued at the last interrogatory.

"I will have some conversation with the captain to-night, and to-morrow at nine o'clock will give you an answer. But your young shipmate there? Well, my lad, do you want to ship?"

"Yes," was the reply, "if my messmate enters."

"But you perceive," said the Lieutenant, "the officers' berths are all taken."

"I do not look for any thing of the kind," replied the young seaman. "I shall be contented and happy to go with my messmate here in any capacity."

"Then come to-morrow morning at nine, and you shall not be separated."

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CHAPTER II.

THE TWO SEAMEN ENTER ON BOARD THE PRIVATEER, FOR THE CRUISE, ETC.

THE two seamen had returned to their lodgings, (a respectable private boarding house in Cherry street,) where they were quietly seated after supper, in a neat and well furnished room. The young seaman was engaged in reading aloud for his companion, for although the elder was a prime seaman, yet, unfortunately, his education was exceedingly limited; a circumstance by no means strange or singular, considering the length of time he had pursued a sea life, and the narrow facilities of acquiring an education in the days of his boyhood.

"Well," said the old tar, interrupting the young seaman, "I think, my boy, we're fairly in for this cruise; for although we have not clapped our flippers to the articles, yet we've let slip a promise, and that's all the same, for I've a notion that a sailor's word ought to be the same as signed, sealed, and delivered in presence of ——; but I have been overhauling my thinking tackles, messmate, since we've had a squint at them chaps there about the rendezvous, and I'll miss

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my reckoning if one half them gentry don't make work for Jack Ketch; and somehow or other, I think there will be a good many of these scape-graces on board of the Cruiser, for d'ye see, their object is to rob and plunder every prize, which thing would take them to the gangway on board of a regular man-of-war; and believe me, messmate," continued the old tar, "since we've sailed together, I've been conning over in my mind that the company of such miserable thieves and robbers was not to your liking, and would not suit such a tight lad with as good larning as yourself. And now, my hearty, if you've got any misgivings about going in that craft, why, you are not yet nailed, and may get off with flying colors, for although I'd rather have three banyan days a week, and the allowance of grog stopped—aye, sooner would I lose a flipper or a fin than part with you, messmate—yet I am not the slippery chap to break my word or bear away from my messmate that I love. But I won't urge you, hard as it may be to part."

"What! part," exclaimed the young seaman passionately, "what! separate from the man who threw himself in the gap between my life and the Englishman's boarding pike, when this arm was powerless from the wound I received in the action! No, no; I have committed many errors in my life, but thank God, ingratitude has never yet been added to the list, and I owe you a debt which can never be paid. No, no; we'll sail together, mess together, and have one chest; the blue billows of the ocean shall be our dwelling

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place; and I say, shipmate, should death first seize this craft of mine, my last moments will end in peace, when I am assured that your hand will sew up and put the close hitches around the hammock that encloses me. What! part, no, never until death snaps the chords of life; and I trust when the muster roll is called at the last day, like true-hearted sailors, we shall both answer cheerfully to that call, and be together safely moored in the broad bay of Heaven."

Here the old tar grasped the hand of his young shipmate, (his feelings being nearly beyond the power of utterance, for his head-pumps were flowing freely,) and mournfully though firmly exclaimed, "We'll never part! But come, come, let us get on another tack. We've sailed together nearly two years, and some how you've got such a hold upon me, especially since that action, that I should like to know more about you, and what drove you to the hard life of a sailor."

The young seaman evaded this by replying that at some future period he would give him a history of his life, and, adroitly changing the subject of conversation, inquired what he thought of the Lieutenant. "By the cut of his jib," replied the old tar, "and the way the long togs hung on him, I just thought a sailor's round rig would set much easier, and then he knows how to talk to a sailor; none of your whipper-snappers that jump into the cabin windows and never get forward of the gang way. I'll warrant me he can clap a gang of rigging over a ship's mast-head like an able seaman; yes yes, he can handle a trumpet or head the boarders

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without flinching, for that chap is not afraid of gunpowder, nor will he dodge at a shot."

The night being far advanced, the two seamen retired, and the next morning, according to appointment, they repaired to the rendezvous, being exactly to the minute promised on the previous afternoon. In a few minutes the Lieutenant entered in company with another, who was immediately introduced to the two seamen as the Commander of the Cruiser.

"This man," said the Lieutenant, addressing the Captain, and pointing to the elder, "is the one who has applied for the boatswain's berth, and that young man, (pointing to the young seaman,) is his shipmate; these are the two about whom we spoke last evening."

The Commander, surveying them both for a few minutes with a searching glance, and after some interrogatories, addressed the old seaman by name, observing that he was happy to have two such fine looking fellows with him.

"And now, Mister," continued he addressing the old tar, "you shall have the boatswain's berth, and your young shipmate, as able seaman. You are entitled, as boatswain, to three shares of prize-money, and you, (addressing the younger,) are entitled to one share and a half."

"Now then," said the Lieutenant, "you will sign the articles."

"Not yet," said the old tar, touching his hat to the Captain, "there is one thing I had forgot to mention;

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that is, my shipmate here and I are not to be separated until one or the other of us slips our moorings."

"Why do you make this request?" inquired the Captain. He hesitated, and then the young seaman, in a clear and manly voice, related, circumstantially, the action on the last cruise with the English transport, that his shipmate had saved his life from the deadly pike of the enemy, when his own arm had been rendered powerless from a deep flesh wound, and that they were two out of ten men that carried the ship by boarding, and that he was stretched on the deck, exhausted from the loss of blood, when the English ensign was hauled down.

During this recital, which was given in a modest and unassuming, though exciting manner, the stern features of the Commander relaxed, and clapping his hand on the shoulder of the young seaman, replied, "You shall not be separated."

The old tar went forward to sign the articles, but recollecting that he could not write, asked his young shipmate to clap his name down, and that he would make a mark, which he did, it bearing a strong resemblance to a turkey's foot, after which the young seaman signed his own name in a handsome running hand, which the Lieutenant examined attentively for a few moments, and then observed that it was a pity that one who appeared to be so much above the occupation which he now sustained, should of necessity be compelled to mix with the crew, and be stowed away on the berth deck of a privateer. Resuming his former man-

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ner, "You perceive," said he, "the articles are nearly full, and the outfit for a three months' cruise will be completed in two days; you will therefore repair on board with all possible despatch, and assume the duties of your stations." No time was lost by the two seamen, and after purchasing a boatswain's call and a suitable quantity of silver chain with some few articles of substantial clothing, they hurried along to their boarding house, and overhauling their chests, they selected such clothing as was most appropriately suited for the cruise, all of which were stowed away in canvass bags, with their names on each; these, together with their hammocks and bedding, comprised the outfit. The remainder of their effects were left in the care of the honest landlord, with whom they had resided.

"Now," observed the old tar, "as we must be on board to-morrow morning, we hav'nt much time to spare, we must go and settle the matter about the prize-money, that is, if we get any, and to be sure this is like counting chickens before they are hatched; howsomever, it is best to get some honest chap who will keep a look-out to windward for us against these land-sharks who are always ready to filch the hard earnings of poor sailors, and I tell you, messmate, if once they get their thieving-irons upon our prize-money, then there will be no more chance of getting it, than if it went to Davy Jones's locker, in the middle of the Western ocean; for somehow or other, there are some of these chaps they call agents, seem to think that sailors are little better than hosses, and that they are bound to serve

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them, and they place just as little value upon their lives; so that they consider when they get the proceeds of prizes in their possession, no matter how many hard knocks, and loss of life and limb, or confinement in British prisons; I say messmate, when they once get grappling irons on it, then its all privateering with them, and poor Jack may whistle for his share But come, let's go and find out who is the agent for the Cruiser."

So saying, they immediately proceeded toward the rendezvous where they ascertained from the lieutenant that by the united assent of the officers and crew, they had selected a merchant of great wealth and high standing, (the owner of the privateer, although a Jew,) for their agent. This did not meet with the approbation of the two seamen, but especially the elder, who declared that the chances were nine out of ten against them, averring that all Jews thought it a duty to rob a Christian, "and I don't know how it is, for I have'nt got much larning in the matters, that our lawmakers have so fixed it that any rogue or villain can cheat an honest man out of his just dues; and I have heard," he continued, "that these land-sharks or agents, whatever you may call them, after fobbing the whole of the prize-money, just make it over to some brother thief, and then take an oath that they've not got any thing, and so get the benefit of the law, cheat their creditors, and after a bit you'll see these chaps living on the fat of the land, in fine houses, and rolling along in carriages. Now, messmate, what do you think of such a law?"

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"The insolvent law," replied the young seaman, "was made for the general good; but especially to the unfortunate honest man it is a blessing, as it protects him against the unfeeling, and merciless creditor, who would, were it not for this law, place him beyond the power to pay his honest debts by confinement in prison. It is true that dishonest men take advantage of this law, but then it is at the expense of their reputation and conscience, for they violate all that is sacred to the human heart, and reduce to poverty and wretchedness the industrious poor, and oftentimes cause bitter tears to fall from the widow and orphan through pinching want."

"God defend me from this," replied the old tar vehemently. "I'd rather have a clean set of papers to go into port at the last day, than all the kelt that is brought into the United States during the whole war. But," continued he, "if you have an honest friend in these parts, we'll just get him to make sure work for us by keeping an eye on that agent."

The two seamen proceeded forthwith to a magistrate's office and had a power of attorney drawn out in favor of the young seaman's uncle, to receive all prize-money belonging to them, that might accrue from the present cruise. This being drawn, it was enclosed in a letter, and forwarded to his uncle, who then resided in Albany.

Every thing being now arranged for the cruise, and as the two seamen were entire strangers in New York, they concluded to return to their lodgings, and

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spend the remaining part of the day and evening in conversing of their friends. "By the way," said the old tar, "I should just like to pass this evening with my old mother on the Cape; she is now the only one that cares for me, and many years have gone over her head, and I suppose it will not be long before she will be moored in the grave-yard. Well, I shall then be alone in the world, and it is not much odds where away I box my compass, for no one then will think of me."

"You do me injustice," replied the young seaman, with great feeling; "can one to whom I owe so much friendship, and with whom I have sworn never to separate while life lasts, can you for a moment suppose that, when your mother is called away, there will be none to think of you?"

"Yes, you are my true-hearted messmate," replied the old tar eagerly, and grasping the hand of the young seaman, renewed his protestation of friendship and union.

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CHAPTER III.

THE PRIVATEER AND HER CREW.

THE two seamen rose early the next morning, and after breakfast bade adieu to their kind host and hostess, repaired on board and reported themselves to the commanding officer, (the second lieutenant,) who received them very graciously and congratulated them on their good fortune, in making choice of so fine a vessel, and especially one which had immortalized herself on her last cruise in an action with a British packet, and her good luck in making captures. The old tar cast a keen glance over the deck of the privateer, and asked the Lieutenant dryly,

"Were you out in her last cruise, sir?"

The reply was in the affirmative.

He shrugged up his shoulders, turned his head away, and stood gazing for a few moments at the scenes which were now in operation on deck; for if the exterior, or the beautiful model of the hull, just proportion of the spars, and neatness of the rig of the Cruizer, gave them so much delight, when they viewed her from the Battery, their feelings now on shipboard were vastly different, for every thing was in confusion

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and disorder; the whole of the deck, (except a small place abaft,) was lumbered with plank, spars, old junk, cordage, barrels of provisions and water-casks; on the larboard side was a pile of round shot, and between the guns in promiscuous heaps were sponges, rammers, gunners' handspikes, wad bags half empty, and the wads strewed on every part of the deck.

The crew (for there were some thirty or forty on board,) bore a strong resemblance to the gentry before described as seen at the rendezvous, for their appearance indicated that they had been gathered from those sinks of vice and infamy in New York, viz.: the Five Points, Pawley's Hook, &c. On the deck lay sprawling some two or three, dead drunk,—others were half and half; on the forecastle were two men with their shirts off, squaring away for a fight, while two parties assumed a threatening attitude, and apparently determined to see fair play. "Go it, highbinders," said one. "At him, cookey," said another. "Fair play!" vociferated a huge fellow, who seemed qualified and determined, as he stood with two enormous fists doubled, ready to enforce the words which he had uttered. The berth deck, if it might be so called, for as yet it was in a perfectly chaotic state, was in strict conformity with the upper deck; the water casks and provisions lay the whole length of that part of the hold set apart for the accommodation of the sailors. Thus far there was neither stowage of water nor provisions, and the plank to form the deck lay scattered here and there, while a group of men on

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the starboard side, who had been employed in the hold, were now formed into a kind of ring. In their looks, and on every feature of their countenances, were legibly depicted in characters which could not be misunderstood, infamy and fraud, for they were gambling, and had a few pieces of small money before them. Another set were plotting a scheme to steal the boat that night, go on shore, have a row at the Hooks, and finally take leave of New York, by robbing a cook-shop of all its fresh grub, that they might have a blow-out and pay the owners of the establishment under a flowing fore-topsail.

Such was the condition of the privateer and her crew, at least of those which were already on board. The second lieutenant, whether a smart officer or a good disciplinarian, certainly at this time exercised but little authority; nor had he much assistance to enforce command, although there were three prize-masters on board who seemed to consider themselves as a kind of supernumeraries or passengers, and as this grade of officers was generally composed of persons who had commanded vessels previously to the war, in many instances were now above command, and assumed therefore the dignity of their former stations. Many of them were of dissipated habits, in whom confidence was destroyed; consequently, for want of employment they were compelled to accept the situation of prize-masters.

But to return. The next morning being the time appointed for sailing, the green hands came off throughout the day, and a more ludicrous sight was never seen

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on shipboard; for such at this period was the mania for privateering, that tradesmen of all descriptions, porters, draymen, hackmen, counting-house clerks, &c., all burned with the fire of patriotism and glory, and thirsted for the blood of Englishmen, or, what is more probable, for the manufactures of British work-shops, to satisfy their cupidity, by converting them into dollars and cents. Among the more singular looking beings that came on board to seek their fortunes, was a tall, grenadier-looking chap, who after having got on board, stood for a few moments in perfect astonishment, as if he were transfixed to the deck, and probably the appearance of the company forward as well as the confused state which the main-deck then exhibited, not suiting his taste or inclination, as well as the other extreme of the Cruiser, he began to measure his steps abaft, when he was saluted by a quaint old salt with a tap on the shoulder, who at the same time bawled out at the top of his voice, "Right about face, major!" Perceiving his mistake, he immediately began to retrace his steps, which afforded great amusement to those on the main-deck, by whom he was interrogated with, "How long have you been in the army?" "What regiment do you belong to?" &c.; all of which he bore patiently, until the cry was sent fore and aft, "Look out for your bread-bags, there's a marine adrift." Perceiving he was the butt of merriment, he could no longer preserve his equanimity, and raising himself to his full stature, being upwards of six feet, with a heavy, muscular frame, and flourishing a pair of

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fists, which hung to arms of uncommon length, exclaimed in not a very pleasing tone, "Gentlemen, I don't understand much about vessels, nor your lingo. I don't think I have done any thing that you should make fun of, or insult me for; but hark'ee, if it's fighting you want, Tim Waters is your man." The determined resolution in which this declaration was made, not only had an immediate effect, but also made a lasting impression on the minds of many of the crew during the remainder of the cruise. The jokes and merriment having ended with our tall friend, they were transferred over to several others, one of whom was a young man of genteel appearance, who had not as yet put off his long clothes, and from the delicate whiteness of his hand might be supposed to have driven the quill a greater part of his time. His baggage consisted of a large leathern travelling trunk, with a pair of boots, and an umbrella lashed on the top, with mattress, bedding, &c. The sight of the baggage, especially the trunk and its appendages, was too much to preserve the quiet risibilities of the reckless group who had gathered round the young man, and they broke out into an immoderately loud laugh; one singing out for the waiter to "Show the gentleman to his room;" another, "How long do you stay, sir?" &c.; all of which so completely disconcerted the young man, that he shrunk away in silence, to seek protection from the quarter-deck.

The game, however, was not yet over, for at this moment came on board a short, thick, duck-legged

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chap, with a round, chubby fat face, fiery red cheeks, and small eyes, which, to use a seaman's expression, "looked like two burnt holes in a blanket." The appearance of this fellow would not impress you with the idea, that he came from the higher walks of life, but rather indicated, and that very strongly too, that his elevated history might have been gradually ascending until he arrived to the very reputable vocation of porter to a tap-room. This man certainly, from his whole appearance, was irresistibly adapted to excite the mirth of all who beheld him. The great length of his body, his short legs, with the uncommon appearance of his red face and small eyes, his great good nature and drollery, (for it seemed that he had picked up many odd sayings and anecdotes, which he related in a way that would provoke mirth from the most serious,) attracted general attention. No marvel, then, if a scene of uproar and merriment was created by his appearance. "Handle yourself this way, Jimmy Ducks," says one. "Don't be squinting at the gentleman's legs," says another. "To be sure they wo'nt be of much sarvice to him in a gale of wind, for his top-works are too heavy for his lower timbers, and mayhap, if a sudden gust strikes him on the beam, why he'll capsize, unless them outriggers there that are shipped on to the hull saves him," (meaning his arms,) which, owing to his short legs, appeared to be of uncommon length. How long Jimmy Ducks might have served these reckless beings as a butt for their jibes and merriment is unknown, if he had not have received it all in

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perfect good nature, joining with them in the laugh against himself, at the same time quaintly acknowledging his ignorance of all that concerned a Cruiser, "but was happy," he said, "to be one of the number that composed her crew, and hoped shortly to become better acquainted."

The arrival of some fifteen or twenty old seamen, diverted the attention of the crew from Jimmy, and no doubt he was not a little satisfied to be rid of their company. Now the old salts had delayed coming on board until the last moment, well knowing the laborious duty always necessary to be performed previously to a departure from port on a cruise. The truth was, however, the duty was not yet executed, for every thing thus far lay in genteel confusion about decks. The most superficial observer would not have been at a loss to discover the difference between these men and a majority of the crew, for although there were a few in a state called half seas over, yet a greater part were perfectly sober, dressed in complete seaman's rig, each having a hammock neatly lashed, and a large canvass bag well stowed with dunnage, with their names printed in large letters both on their hammocks and bags; these were all quickly on board, and instead of that raillery which had been so freely conferred upon the others, the old sailors were considered as a kind of superior beings, to whom a certain deference was due by the green hands, and Jack in return complimented these gentry, by allowing them to swing their hammocks near the hatchway,

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so that they might have the benefit of the cool air, taking good care, however, themselves to swing their hammocks as far abaft as possible, for the twofold purpose of having a skulk in their watch below at night, and to keep clear of the sprays, which usually pour down the gratings, the hatches being seldom on, except in heavy gales of wind. Now the green hands, by the proximity of their berths to the hatchway, were not only exposed to all this, but much more, such as the constant passing up and down, the hoisting up of provisions, &c., so that with these and the noise and confusion on deck, very little sleep could be obtained by those who were near the hatchway.

It was near to the close of the day, and although little had been done, comparatively, to get the Cruiser in readiness for sea the next day, yet the berth-deck had assumed a form and shape, for the ballast as well as the water and provisions were stowed, and the planks were seamed which formed the covering or deck. Some idea may be formed of the comfort and convenience of this part of the vessel, assigned for the residence of about a hundred sailors and petty officers. In the first place then, from the berth-deck to the upper deck beams, the space was not more than four feet in height, and the length might be fifty feet fore and aft. An upright posture therefore it was impossible to maintain, so if you succeeded in getting any distance from the hatchway, it must be on all fours; a tolerable conception can therefore be formed as to the comfort of this location, when you add to the former incon-

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veniences, that of the seamen's clothing and hammocks were strung to the beam. Here then were crowded nearly one hundred human beings of all nations, ages, color, character, and perhaps we may not exceed the bounds of truth, if we say there was as great a variety in this crew, and as motley and unprincipled, (although there were some honorable exceptions, but they were few and far between,) as ever floated over the ocean in an American cruiser. All the officers now came on board, with the exception of the Captain, namely, the first and third lieutenant, sailing master, four additional prize-masters, lieutenant of marines, and captain's clerk. Of the first lieutenant we have had occasion to say something, having introduced him at the rendezvous, but we shall speak more particularly of him as well as the other officers in the subsequent part of this work.

It was soon evident from the conversation and stern countenance of the first lieutenant, that he was not at all satisfied or pleased with the confused state of the Cruiser's deck, and the disorder of the crew; although it was necessary, in order to keep the men on board, not to insist yet on a severe discipline; yet the condition of the Cruiser and crew was so entirely different from what he expected when he came on board, that he hesitated not to express his dissatisfaction to the second lieutenant.

"Let the boatswain and his shipmate be called," demanded the first lieutenant.

The two seamen appeared immediately on the quarter-deck, touching their hats respectfully, but ex-

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hibited great mortification and disappointment in their looks and manner.

"I perceive," said the first lieutenant, addressing them both, "that the condition of the Cruiser does not exactly suit your views of duty and discipline; but with your cooperation, I think we shall have a different state of things, before another day. But have you been installed as the boatswain of the Cruiser since you came on board?" inquired the first lieutenant.

"No, sir," replied the old tar.

"Then, sir, wind that call, and summons all hands on deck fore and aft."

For the first time since our two heroes came on board, the shrill whistle of the boatswain's pipe was heard fore and aft, and repeated three times, accompanied with the stentorian lungs of the old tar, which might have been heard at least a mile, with the cry of "All hands ahoy!"

As soon as all hands were mustered, and silence was proclaimed, the first lieutenant, in a clear and commanding voice, pointing to the old tar, and addressing the officers and crew, said:

"This is the boatswain of the Cruiser; you will therefore respect and obey him in the discharge of his duty."

After this formal installation was over, the decks being cleared, all hands were piped to supper.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUPPER.

THE sun had now sunk beneath the western horizon, and many smal; clouds uprose, which for beauty and magnificence defied the most consummate skill of the artist's pencil. Ascending into the azure vault, they sent forth a balmy freshness, which came stealing over the waters with quietude and stillness, scarcely ruffling its placid bosom. The twilight now began to cast a pensive shade, while here and there a glittering star or planet shot its brilliant light, increasing in proportion as night advanced. On one side lay the city of New York. A thousand lights were now seen twinkling from the numerous dwellings and shops which stretched along the East River for nearly a league; these, together with many others, on the rising ground, produced a light so brilliant that by its reflection numerous spires were visible, while the noise and hum of the many carriages, drays, and numerous human beings, retiring from business could be heard; all of which, as seen and heard from the deck of the Cruiser, almost inspired the idea of enchantment. On the other side, as far as the eye could trace, was the beautiful Island, which forms the

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channel called Long Island Sound No sight can be more picturesque than that which meets the eye, when sailing through this sound, particularly in the summer months. After passing the city of New York, the coast is lined with highly cultivated farms, with here and there a splendid country seat, adorned with all the variety of nature and art, while flourishing towns and villages on the coast of Connecticut, rise one after another to the view, to the extent of one hundred and sixty miles. The coast of Long Island presents, as if to relieve the eye, extensive woods, tall forest trees, and here and there a surface dotted with a small town or village, far removed from the noise and confusion of the city, which justly claims for her state the empire of America. At the extreme east end of this Island is situated the town of Sag Harbor, a place of some importance on account of its commerce and business in the whale fishery. At the extreme southwest part is situated the town of Brooklyn, (now incorporated into a city.) Here, also, is an extensive Navy Yard, Arsenal, Marine Barracks, &c. &c. From shipboard may be seen the Brooklyn heights; and the eye as well as the imagination can trace the route of that memorable retreat of the Continential forces across the East River to New York. So profoundly secret and silent was the movement, that the British General, who had made his disposition for the attack in the morning, was astonished and surprised at this consummate manœuvre of the illustrious American General.

The recollection of this as well as the many hardships

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and privations endured by the patriots of the Revolution, and the skill, bravery, prudence, and patience of their leader the immortal Washington, and the glorious termination of the struggle for liberty, should inspire feelings of pride and patriotism in the breast of every true Amercian. Once more, then, is America in arms against the parent land; already had the vaunted Mistress of the Ocean been humbled by the naval prowess of American Tars, and although the war was in its infancy, yet the American private armed vessels were swarming the ocean, crippling the enemy's commerce, and making many captures, notwithstanding the great naval force of the British, which floated over almost every part of the Western Ocean.

The Cruiser, of which we now write, had acted her part well thus far, and was now on the eve of a second cruise, and as the reader has been presented with a description of her, as well as the crew, we shall now introduce him, according to promise, to the supper previous to her departure on the cruise. The supper was not what might have been expected by landsmen, when they associate the remembrance of their own comfortable board with the hard biscuit and salt beef and pork, the usual fare on shipboard. For the success of the last cruise had made the owners in this respect somewhat liberal; besides it was a main object with them to allow an abundant supply of fresh provisions, tea, coffee, soft bread, &c., in order to keep the old tars on board, but especially to impress the belief among the greenhorns, that such was the usual mode of living.

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In the grey twilight of evening there might have been seen a mass of human beings crowding the main deck and forecastle, in squads of a dozen each, surrounding a huge mess-kid, resembling a small sized tub, well lined with fresh beef, served up to suit the taste of the company, partly boiled and partly fried, while in every direction were strewed loaves of soft bread, (tack, as the sailors term it,) and coffee was served up in buckets, for the greater convenience of dipping out at pleasure, as thirst and inclination might require. Now begun the work of demolition, and it soon became evident that the enormous appetites of the men made a very sensible diminution of the beef, bread and coffee. "This is not bad to take," said a tall, ill-visaged, lean chap, as he was about to introduce into his mouth, (which might not be inaptly compared to that of an anaconda,) a huge piece of beef. "I just thought as much," said an old sailor, "when I saw you hoisting in that provision and stowing it in your lower hold so fast. Hark 'ee," continued the old salt, "I'll sheer clear of your mess anyhow, for the Lord help the chaps that's got to have their grub with you; they 'll have at least two banyan days a week." From the appearance of this fellow, there was a great deal of truth in the remark of the sailor, for he not only had given ocular demonstration of his enormous appetite on this occasion, but his whole exterior indicated in the strongest possible manner, one of those loafing gentry, whose support, depending on others, consequently is always precarious and doubtful; but when an opportunity presents, like

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Jimmy Ducks fifing

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the present splendid repast, is not slow to make up former deficiencies.

"Avast there! don't swallow that tin-pot," bawled out another to a chap who was about draining off the contents of the third tin-pot of coffee, which might hold nearly a quart. "I say," continued he, "if you go on at this rate, we shall have to take on board an extra five hundred gallons of water, or we shall have to go on short allowance before the cruise is half up."

Our tall friend before-mentioned sat quietly, though industriously satisfying his appetite; the truth was, his giant form and great muscular power, together with the emphatic demonstration of his readiness to resent an insult, as manifested when he came on board, had made such a lasting impression on the minds of the crew, that it not only elicited for him a kind of respect, or fear, if you please, but he remained quite unmolested during the whole of this gracious meal. Not so with the young man in long clothes. Having seated himself on the extreme outside of the rest of the company, he had not only to endure the jeers and scoffs of many of the crew, but partook so sparingly of the supper that an attentive observer might have read the workings of his mind, which, if clothed into language, would probably have said, "I wish I were on shore again, and far from the society of such a company as compose this crew." An old salt who sat by him, gazing attentively in his face, and perceiving the strong emotion exhibited (for the salt tear was standing in his eye,) and clapping his hand on the shoulder of the young man, said to him,

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in a soothing voice, "Come, come, cheer up; what though we are not in the land of plates and knives and forks, and I suppose our chaps here, and this kind of sarving up grub, you are not much used to, or much to your liking; but howsomever, I'd advise you, lad, even if the milk-man don't come off, to line your jacket well, by stowing away a good cargo to-night; it will do you good, for hark'ee, we'll have a change of diet when we get into blue water." The kind manner in which these words were spoken, made a deep impression upon the youth, and it soon became evident, from the alteration in his looks, and the cheerfulness with which he augmented his meal, that the current of his feelings was materially changed, and also that the sailor's kindness inspired him with confidence.

But of all the company that graced the festive board, none certainly bore a more conspicuous part than Jimmy Ducks. He was not only a mark on which they expended their jokes and merriment, which by the way, fell on him perfectly harmless, for his good humor and quaint manner of reply often turned the tables upon those who attempted to bring him into ridicule; and although Jimmy could play a very excellent game at eating and drinking, yet his amazement knew no bounds when he beheld the rapid decrease of the enormous quantity of provisions, which but a few moments previous had been spread on the deck of the Cruiser. Indeed, his astonishment was so great that he would often break out with the sententious expression, "The way these gentlemen eat is a caution to unbelievers."

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But as every thing has its commencement as well as its finale, the truth of the moral in this instance was now about to be accomplished, for kid after kid of beef, bucket after bucket of coffee, and loaf after loaf of bread disappeared, when three or four simultaneously bawled out, "Clear away the wreck." And wreck it certainly was, for nothing was left except empty kids, buckets, tin-pots, spoons, &c., proving by actual demonstration that there is an end to all things.

The company aft at present consisted of two separate divisions, viz: the lieutenants, prize-masters, sailing-master, lieutenant of marines, and surgeon. These messed together in the ward-room. Forward of this the petty officers, or the boatswain, gunner, carpenter, sail-maker, and the young seaman, messed. This apartment was separated from the berth-deck by a bulkhead, and from the ward-room by another, and the entrance to it was the same as that to the ward-room. Although the supper consisted of the same kind of provision as that of the sailors, yet this being the region of knives and forks, cups and saucers, of course it was served up in better style, and exhibited that cleanliness and respect due to the officers of the private armed vessels of war. This meal was not so rapidly demolished, neither was there any exhibition of inordinate appetites; yet it was received with peculiar relish, and it may be observed, with a degree of refinement, good humor, and blunt honesty, which ever characterizes true-hearted Sons of the Ocean. Although there were two at least in the ward-room that had never yet seen blue water,

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yet they evinced the same good feeling which prevailed among the other officers. As regards the petty officers, they were old seamen, and deeply experienced in their profession, or as it was said of them, they were "diamonds of the first water."

The supper being concluded and the cloth removed, the table was soon replenished with bottles of old Madeira, and glasses to each of the company.

"Come, gentlemen," said the first lieutenant, who presided at the table, "fill up your glasses." This was quickly done, and he proposed a toast, which was, "Success to the noble Cruiser and her brave commander." This was drank with great satisfaction by all. Several other toasts were then drunk, and the wine passed round rapidly, and soon began to make a sensible impression on the company. Some laughed immoderately, while others were discussing with great vehemence the strength and good qualities of the Cruiser. One swore they would make their fortune this cruise, while another conceived himself to be actually boarding a prize; and, indeed, nearly the whole, with the exception of the first lieutenant, lieutenant of marines, and surgeon, boasted of their valor and prowess.

At this point the first lieutenant looked at his watch, rose hastily and observed, "Come, gentlemen, it is nearly eight o'clock, and as you are aware that our crew are not under the best state of discipline, it will be necessary for us to repair on deck and regulate the watch. This duty must fall on us to-night, for no doubt there are some of our lads that will try to give us the slip.

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This must be prevented, if possible, by keeping a strict look-out, and securing the boats to the davits."

The petty officers were called, and the watches being divided into four, with four officers in each watch, they all went on deck; and after securing the boats, orders were given to the crew, that they might all go below and turn in, and be ready for an early turn out in the morning. The greater part obeyed this order cheerfully; there were some, however, who seemed disposed to hang back, choosing rather to take up their lodgings on the soft side of a plank, than to be crammed into so small a compass with so large a number of human beings. The order, however, was peremptory, and they reluctantly obeyed, after which the gratings were put on and secured.

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CHAPTER V.

THE ANCHOR WATCH—CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE TWO SEAMEN.

THE heavy sound of cannon from the different vessels of war now lying in port, as well as from the batteries, came rolling along the water, and the well-known cry of "All's well," from the distinct but hoarse voice of the sentinel, proclaimed the hour to be eight o'clock. The night was clear and cloudless, except a few white streaks, in the northeast, (known to the seamen by the name of a "mackerel sky,") indicating that the wind would shortly blow from that quarter. The deep sound of the cannon was now lost in the distance, and as the voice of the sentinel was also hushed, a universal stillness prevailed; for although not more than three quarters of an hour had elapsed since the gratings were secured, yet the whole space of the berth-deck, where so many human beings were incarcerated, was silent as the grave.

The watch having been set, the first lieutenant managed to have the boatswain and the young man (in whom he seemed to repose great confidence,) in the last anchor watch — that is, from two until four, A. M.

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— with orders to call all hands when the watch was out. The anchor watch differs materially from the sea watch; also in point of the number contained in an anchor watch, vessels of war differ from those of merchant vessels, the former having by far a greater number of men. When a ship or vessel leaves port, the crew are equally divided into what is called "watch and watch," having four hours alternately on deck and below, with the exception of the watch from four to eight, P. M. This is divided into two watches, denominated by the seamen, "dog watches," for the purpose of giving each watch eight hours below every other night. The anchor watch in the present instance contained but four men, for the reason before-mentioned; this number in general, is sufficient, especially when a vessel is riding to an anchor in a good roadstead or harbor, with but one anchor down, where there is no tideway. If, however, there is a strong tide, with an open roadstead or harbor, then the vessel is generally moored, that is, one anchor is let go, so that she may tend to the flood; the other is carried out in the launch and let go, so that she may swing to the ebb-tide. This is done for the purpose of keeping the ship so that she may not foul her anchor, that is, get a turn with the cable round the stocks. In this case, if the wind should blow hard, the anchor would not be likely to hold on. Judgment and seamanship are required by those who keep an anchor watch in a tide-way; for the vessel is only kept clear of her anchor by some one of the sails and helm.

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The night wore away without any thing material transpiring, and at two, A. M., according to appointment, the boatswain and young seaman, with two prize masters, took their stations on deck; the two former taking the look-out forward and the others aft. The two tars remained for a few moments without speaking a word, steadfastly gazing on the weather; for by this time the sky was overspread with the scud, and heavy, broken clouds hove up in the northeast. The boatswain broke silence by observing:

"I'll miss my reck'ning, lad, if this craft goes to sea to-day. Look yonder at that dark cloud; before all hands are piped to breakfast, we'll have a whistle from that quarter. And by the way," continued he, "if it should be as it was yesterday, we are in no condition to go to sea. I've been in all kinds of craft, from a line-of-battle ship down to an oyster boat. I've been in all parts of the world, boxing the compass up and down, fair weather and foul, with all sorts of chaps, for more than twenty years; but in all my going to sea, I never met with such a craft as this, and such a set of cut-throats and pirates as we have here. And between you and I, messmate, I can tell a sailor as soon as I get a squint at his upper works; and let me tell you, there are not above twenty on board of this craft can take the helm, and as to the gentlemen aft, they may or may not be good sailors or good officers, but there's none of them takes my fancy but the first lieutenant. As for them prize-masters, why they'll do to eat up the grub, and stow away the grog; but after they get aboard of

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a prize they swagger, talk big, drink brandy, and so get out of their reck'ning, and by their bad management, are re-taken; and so many a poor sailor will be thrown into prison during the whole war. Now what is your opinion?"

"Why," observed the young seaman, "I did not expect to find as good a state of discipline and order as on board of a regular man-of-war, but I assure you I was wholly unprepared for such a state of things as we have seen here — so much insubordination, and so little command, that I confess to you I have had many misgivings; for the truth is, my opinion about the gentlemen aft, agrees with your own: and if this crew is brought under any tolerable state of discipline, it will require great firmness to effect it. I have thought if by chance we should fall in with an enemy's force, equal, or perhaps inferior to our own, shortly after we leave port, with the crew little better than they are at present, why then I say we should neither make a profitable business of it nor acquire much honor to the American flag."

"Come, come, messmate," replied the boatswain, somewhat startled at the last observation of his companion, "we can't always tell what a chap is by his looks, though for the matter of that, I am not often deceived that way; for there's that knotty, hickory-faced little skipper of this craft, that we saw at the rendezvous the other day; why he looks more like a country grave-digger, than captain of a privateer; and yet they say he is all courage and will fight any thing."

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The young seaman replied by saying that courage "was an excellent trait in the commander of a cruiser, but then what is courage when judgment and prudence are wanting? I do not mean that the latter should be extreme, because it must always be regulated by the former. When these three, therefore, are combined in the superior of an armed vessel, they will greatly overbalance the incapacity of the inferior officers and crew. If, therefore, this should be the character of our commander, the cruise may turn out well; and perhaps we shall not have to regret having joined this craft; but," he continued, (shifting the conversation,) "what do you think of privateering as a mode of warfare?"

"Why, I've not much opinion of war any how," replied the boatswain, "for it is chaps like us that carry it on, and get all the hard knocks, and them that never smell gunpowder or bang salt water, generally run away with all the whack and honor, if there's any honor in fighting; but as to privateering, I think it is better for chaps like us to fight in this way than in a man-of-war, for d'ye see, here we get some prize-money, but in a regular man-of-war, although there is more than a general average in the killed and wounded among the sailors, yet there is always a particular average in sharing money among the officers of a man-of-war."

"That may be very true," replied the young seaman; "nevertheless, the more I reflect on this mode of warfare the less I think of it; and now that we are upon this subject, I will give you my opinion about this matter.

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War, then, is a great evil, even when it is known to be most necessary. It oftentimes happens, however, that nations go to war merely through pride and ambition; this is truly dreadful, when we reflect upon the results. In the present war, however, America had been driven to this measure, as the last hope of obtaining redress for wrongs long committed on her commerce, and for violations of the best rights of man, by dragging him from under the protection of his own flag in despite of his own nativity, as shown by passports and protection, given by the constituted authorities of his own country. Long has America borne with these insults; remonstrance after remonstrance has failed, and now the tocsin is sounded, war is proclaimed, and all my powers and energies shall be employed in supporting free trade and sailor's rights; but you must pardon me, for I believe I have got off my course. Well then, in regard to privateering as a mode of warfare. In the first place, regular government vessels are manned and equipped, mainly, to contend with the enemy's vessels of the same class; and it rarely ever happens that a man-of-war, in the time of hostilities, cruises exclusively for the purpose of capturing merchantmen. It is true, if they fall in with them of course they make captures. This is generally effected without loss of life. Now the case is entirely different with privateers. Their entire object is to cruise, and capture merchant vessels, and avoid, if possible, everything in the shape of a man-of-war, unless it is a very inferior force, and you are aware that a merchant vessel, pursuing a lawful trade, with a small com-

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plement of men and a few guns, often defends itself to the last. Here, then, is great loss of life, and not only so, but after the capture is made, the desperadoes which mostly compose the crews of privateers, commit scenes of robbery and plunder upon the vessel and the innocent victims of their fury, the bare thought of which makes the heart to sicken and bleed. Where, then, I ask, is the honor connected with this mode of warfare? To be sure there are honorable exceptions in privateers, and among their officers and crews; and it is well there are; if it were not for these exceptions, their name would be infamous, their character despised, and they would be shunned by all good men, and become a by-word and reproach in every community."

"I believe you are right," replied the boatswain, thoughtfully, "but if we had this bit of small talk on the battery yonder, why then we should 'nt been keeping this morning watch; howsomever, we are here, that's sartain, and my fashion is always to make the best of a bad bargain; any way, there's two chaps on board this craft that can do their duty fair weather or foul, aye, that won't dodge at a shot, and, side and side, can board the enemy."

"Yes," said the young seaman, passionately interrupting him, "and after the enemy is captured they will never bring disgrace or dishonor on the name or character of a seaman, by robbing and plundering a conquered foe. I believe we are both somewhat disappointed," he continued; "however, I have always noticed on board of a regular man-of-war, that when

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the first lieutenant and boatswain understand themselves, the ship is not only always neat and in good order, but she is always under the best state of discipline, and if that rule holds good, we shall not regret having entered on board of this privateer; but see, the day is breaking, and look, the sand in the half hour glass has nearly run out; thus is human life. Yon unconscious multitude that has slept serene and quiet, prefiguring the image of death, will soon rise to scenes of active life, and many too, like that ray of light which we now behold, will spring forth into new existence; but, alas! how strongly are we reminded by this little half-hour glass, that the sand of human life will soon run out, and man shall sleep the long sleep of death, and like that glass will remain still."

"Well, I've a notion," replied the boatswain, "that this kind of lingo and these kind of thoughts won't be heard every day on board this craft; no, no, I just think that something very different will be heard every day forward and aft. But how is it, lad, that you have larnt how to talk in this way?"

"Why," replied the young seaman, "the associations which have been presented to my mind have forcibly called up to my recollection former days, when, blessed with the confidence and love of those who gave me being, and who bestowed on me an education and every enjoyment that wealth and the highest principles of virtue and honor could give; I was happy then, in the rectitude of my actions; all the affections of my heart seemed to flow into a channel

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of love toward those dear objects, and in return they lavished upon me a full share of indulgence and esteem; but,"—at this moment eight bells were struck from the different vessels in the harbor, the heavy cannon was heard, the sound of which reverberated along the East River, proclaiming the well-known daylight gun. The sand in the half-hour glass had run out; it was four o'clock, and the boatswain wound his call three times, with the accompaniment at each, in a tremendous hoarse cry, of "All hands on deck, ahoy!" The officers were also called, the gratings taken off, and in less than half an hour, the privateer's decks were crowded with a living mass of human beings.

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CHAPTER VI.

MORNING DUTIES, PREPARATION FOR SEA, STATIONS, ETC

THE north-easter, according to the predictions of the boatswain, had already set in, and blew fresh; the heavens were entirely overcast, threatening a severe fall of rain. The crew now presented a very different appearance from what they wore on the previous day. All were sober, and the presence and commanding firmness of the first lieutenant made not only a powerful impression upon the crew, but seemed also to inspire the officers with a confidence and energy very different from that which had been exhibited by them since the two seamen came on board.

The customary duties of the morning were now being performed, and although it was not done with that system and regularity with which this duty is carried on on board of a man-of-war, yet the promptness and alacrity in obeying every command, called forth a word of approbation from the first lieutenant. The decks underwent the process of holystoning. To make it more intelligible, it may be observed that these are soft sand stones, weighing about one hundred pounds each, with a flat surface; at each end is an iron ring, to which is

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attached a rope or lanyard; two or three men take hold of each rope, and by drawing them forward and aft, after the deck is wet and well sprinkled with sand, they render it as white and clean as the most fastidious lady could wish her parlor. This operation continued about one hour, during which every thing was moved so as to give a fair opportunity of cleansing the decks thoroughly.

The Lieutenant, having charge of different sections of the deck, and of course different portions of duty, it was not long before a material change was exhibited in the appearance of the deck, as well as every part of the privateer, for not only was the inside cleansed, but the outside also. The sails were stowed into cloths, the yards were squared by the lifts and braces, and every rope was hauled taut, so that at seven bells the practised eye of the able seaman could not detect a deficiency in the neat and ship-shape order of the Cruiser. As this was the hour for breakfast, the well-known sound of the boatswain's whistle proclaimed it to the no small satisfaction of the crew, and while this meal was being in operation fore and aft, the petty officers, among whom were the boatswain and young seaman, expressed great satisfaction at the alteration for the better which was made in the privateer, in so short time.

"This is all owing to the first lieutenant," replied the boatswain. "He has given new life and energy to all on board."

"It is certainly true," replied the young seaman,

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"that he is a man of firmness and decision, and understands the duties of his station, but then he has been aided in the execution of his duties this morning, and my old friend and messmate will not charge me with flattery, when I say that the carrying into effect of a large share of that duty, devolved on his ability and firmness."

"Well," replied the boatswain, "if I did not know that it was not your fashion to make fun, I should think you were pouring soft soap down my back. I did no more than my duty, lad, and that is just what I intend to carry out during this cruise."

"After what I have seen this morning," said the young seaman, "I feel much better reconciled; and if our Commander proves to be the man he is represented, no doubt we shall have a successful cruise."

These and other desultory matters were discussed until the breakfast hour was concluded, and again all hands were piped on deck.

If it was a matter of surprise to behold the material change made in the privateer, in so short a space of time as a morning watch, the boatswain and young seaman could not but admire the ability and experience, manifested by the first lieutenant, in the arrangements which were made, and the orders given to get the Cruiser in readiness for sea. In the first place then, the hammocks were piped up, and stowed away in the nettings; captains of the hold were appointed to regulate the berth-deck; the gunner and his crew put the large guns in order, and all the paraphernalia attached

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to them, so that the armament in a short time underwent a radical change, and presented as neat a little battery, as any other private armed vessel. The carpenter and his gang overhauled boats, spars, pump-gear, &c. &c., the sailmaker overhauled the sails, and the boatswain discharged the duty assigned to him with a management and ability seldom witnessed by officers of this grade in privateers. While the petty officers were discharging their several duties, others were employed in stretching the boarding netting around the Cruiser, and seizing them into battens prepared for that purpose; on each side of the trunk were strongly secured two arm-chests with fifty stand of muskets in each, covered with tarpaulins to prevent their being injured by the rain and dashing spray; in the Captain's cabin, pistols, cutlasses, polished in the highest style, were neatly arranged in circular form, and presented a handsome and warlike appearance. Here too was the magazine, the entrance to which was safely guarded, by covering the entire scuttle with lead, and a screen was run athwart the cabin, to drop in the time of action, as a preventive from fire; many also were employed in fitting preventer slings, for the yards, gaffs, &c., also stoppers for the rigging; all the studding-sail gear, yard ropes, and deck tackles were rove, and the bandages or chafing gear, such as leathers, mats, battens, &c., were put on the rigging to prevent rubbing or chafing from the motion of the vessel, and as it is well-known to every seaman, although in some instances many hands make light as well as quick work,

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yet here was an exception to the general rule, consequently, it took some time to accomplish the work before described, nor was it effected until late in the afternoon. At four, P. M., however, every thing was in its place, and there was a place for every thing. All were securely lashed about the upper deck, all was arranged and secured on the berth-deck; in short, all was in a state of preparation, with the exception of stationing the men, to proceed immediately to sea, after the Commander was on board.

There is nothing that imparts more pleasure to a good officer, than to have a ship in fine order, and although the first lieutenant did not relax in the least, any of that unbending discipline which had characterized his movements in the fore part of this day, yet it was evident from his looks that he felt satisfied with the condition of the Cruiser, especially as this was the hour appointed for the boat to be sent on shore for the Commander and his luggage; consequently preparations were being made for his reception, as became the rank and station of a captain of an armed vessel.

Perhaps no monarch is more absolute in holding the reins, or dispensing the offices of government in the state, than a captain of a ship is over those who compose his crew. If the disposition of the potentate be arbitrary and tyrannical, his acts are in accordance, and his subjects are made to feel the effects of those malevolent passions; it is just so with the captain of a vessel, with this single exception, it often happens that the latter is an uneducated man. Now such

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being clothed with supreme authority, generally exact the most scrupulous, and often the most servile respect from those under their command, and in default thereof punishment is inflicted according to the magnitude of the offence. The mode of this punishment is that which a sailor calls "working up," or doing unnecessary work; sometimes it consists in keeping all hands on deck during the entire day, or in stopping the grog; these three are even worse to a sailor than corporeal punishment. In short, it is in the power of the commander to make his crew happy or miserable. I have myself been placed in both positions. I have seen the crew of a ship perfectly happy, and at the same time there was no relaxation of discipline, the duties of the vessel were discharged promptly and energetically, and every command implicitly obeyed. I have also sailed with a captain altogether opposite in his character, being an uneducated man, imperious and overbearing in his disposition, and the ship was by his acts made a prison, and the crew galley slaves.

The boat was now within a few yards of the Cruiser, having on board the captain and his luggage; the officers assembled round the gangway, the boatswain wound his call, the side-boys sprung out with the manropes, the boat was alongside, the oars were thrown up an end, and in a moment the Commander of the Cruiser was on deck, receiving and returning salutations of respect from all the officers, after which he proceeded aft with the first lieutenant. The Commander scrutinized every part of the Cruiser that was then visible to

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his eye, and he appeared perfectly satisfied with her condition. Some desultory conversation ensued between him and the first lieutenant, and it was thought advisable to station the men and choose the watches forthwith, as this would be a certain method of ascertaining if all hands were on board. Accordingly the men were mustered, the roll was called, the watches were chosen, and the men were appointed to the several stations according to their appropriate ability, as exhibited on the shipping articles; the able seamen were appointed to the forecastle and foretop, the ordinary seamen with some green hands, to the maintop and after guard, and the stout greenhorns, loafers, &c. &c., as waisters, swabbers, or any other duty that did not require a knowledge of seamanship. This duty being performed, it was determined by the Commander to give the lieutenant of marines an opportunity of selecting twenty men to act in the capacity of marines, one of which was to be dubbed sergeant, and two others were to be chosen to act as drummer and fifer. But now a difficulty arose, for as they had neglected to ship a fifer, they knew not whether there was any on board that could perform this office. This difficulty, however, was soon removed, for immediately after the question was asked if there was any on board that could play on the fife, Jimmy Ducks stepped forward and very modestly observed:

"Gentlemen, I should like to serve you in that way, and I would n't mind to belong to this here company, for that's just what I'm used to. Yes, I've fifed for a

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volunteer company in York, a many a long year, and if you don't believe me, why let me go and get my fife which I always takes with me, to drive away my melancholy, for I'm very much given to the glooms, gentlemen."

Jimmy's appearance and certainly his countenance did not prove the truth of the last assertion, for it was uttered in a kind of smothered laugh. Jimmy soon produced his fife, and was ordered to give an exhibition of his musical powers. He did so, by playing the double drag to the tune of "St Patrick's day in the morning." The music, as well as the time, which he kept with his feet by stamping on the deck at the sound of each note, without the least regard to the rules of music, perfectly astonished and delighted his hearers, who probably were not the best judges of harmony and music. After blowing some time, Jimmy stopped to get breath, as well as to get his features restored to their wonted placidity, for during the time of playing they were awfully distorted, especially his cheeks, which were so much inflated by the wind which he endeavored to blow into the fife, that they were swollen out to an enormous bulk. When Jimmy had sufficient time to rest, he was ordered to continue his music, and he forthwith struck up the old tune of Fisher's Hornpipe, to the great delight of the crew, but especially of the cook's mate, (a Long Island mulatto,) whose legs and feet caught the inspiration, and irresistibly led him off into a rapid double shuffle. The sound of the mulatto's feet struck full upon the ear of the fifer, when he involun-

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tarily turned round and beheld the effects produced by his fife in the concord of sweet sounds. The pipped eyes, inflated nostrils, thick lips, woolly head, and flat feet as well as the rapid movement of the cook's mate, was too much for poor Jimmy; his small eyes closed, his large mouth opened and expanded nearly from ear to ear, his whole frame was convulsed, and dropping his fife on deck, he broke out into an immoderate fit of laughter, exclaiming at intervals, "This is not the first time my fife has made a nigger dance." Jimmy being so well satisfied with his own performance, was compelled to make another of the dancing party. The infection soon spread fore and aft, and the quarter-deck as well as the main were now in one general burst of roar and merriment, for all eyes were fixed on Jimmy Ducks, or "Laughing Jimmy," as he was now called. His naturally comical appearance, but especially his face, was rendered doubly so by his rapid movement, and immoderate laugh; his short legs were taxed to the utmost of their power in supporting an unusually long body, which, by its size and great weight, irresistibly compelled a kind of movement similar to that of bobbing up and down. It is uncertain how long this state of things would have lasted, if the sun-down gun from the man of war had not been discharged, which reminded the officers that the colors were not yet hauled down. Silence was therefore proclaimed, the colors were lowered down, and the boatswain piped to supper.

Jimmy Ducks had now become a favorite, and was undoubtedly, in the estimation of the sailors, a great

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acquisition to the Cruiser; nor was this feeling exclusive to them: the officers, but especially the Commander, partook largely of the same spirit, and he had good reason, as will be seen hereafter.

It is said by the inspired writers, that "there is a time to play, and a time to dance;" certainly there could not have been a more appropriate or proper time, for the scene which has been described to be enacted; because, all who are acquainted with sailors, are aware that those who become at all disaffected, always select the last night in port, to "tip the dodge," as they term it, or in other words, run away. Now the musical powers and almost inimitable drollery of Jimmy had inspired the crew with such a degree of contentment and cheerfulness, that it not only reconciled, (at least in appearance,) all who might have been discontented, but it also gave life and spirit to the execution of every duty on board the Cruiser. The boatswain too, was among those who were highly gratified. "That's a rum chap," observed he to the young seaman. "I see by the cut of his jib that he's more knave than fool, aye, aye, that whistling and grinning will get him clear of many an odd job this cruise. I think he'd make a good figure-head for a ship, for them short pins, and long hull, with that pretty face, would look well on a ship's bow, and then, lad, that pretty little opening of his stretched out, would invite all the dolphins, bonetta, &c., alongside, in whatever ocean she might sail."

Now the young seaman, although he had not much of a taste for buffoonery, acknowledged himself gratified

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that "Laughing Jimmy" was on board, because it had a good effect upon the crew.

The anchor watch was set, as on the preceding night, and the same precaution taken with the crew, and before two bells were struck, all hands were locked in sleep, (except the deck officers,) and profound silence reigned throughout the Cruiser.

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CHAPTER VII.

REFLECTIONS, GETTING UNDER WAY, FIRST NIGHT OUT, ETC.

THE sun rose this morning in a clear and cloudless sky, and the elements were propitious. The northwest gale blew briskly, and every thing appeared conducive to the supposition that the future would be bright and fair. Indeed, such was the condition of the winds, weather, the fine appearance of the Cruiser, and the universal harmony that now prevailed among the crew, that it roused up the latent feelings of superstition, not only common among the more ignorant and unlearned sailors, but also among those in the cabin; for whatever may be the education of a seaman, or his opportunities for mingling in society, yet if he has followed an ocean life for any length of time, he will become more or less tinctured with this belief without evidence. Thus it was in the present instance, fore and aft; for they looked on the bright side, nor calculated the chances of disappointment, but were most sanguine from present circumstances, of a successful and brilliant cruise. Even the boatswain, although of a cooler temperament, expressed his hearty belief that they would have good luck.

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"Look at yon sun," observed the young seaman, "and see how brightly he shines, and how rapidly he ascends to the meridian; presently he will descend, and as rapidly will he sink beneath the western horizon, and disappear from our view. Have you never seen a morning as clear, and that sun as bright as it is now, yet ere he had peformed half his daily round, was totally obscured, and the heavens overspread with blackness, while howling winds spent their fury on the bark? Oh yes! the brightest and the fairest prospects are often blasted, or at best, how fleeting and transitory are our highest pleasures, and even our rational gratifications when restricted by time. Man's life too, how short, though it may be prolonged to an advanced age, yet many of his years, as truly expressed by the Psalmist, are labor and sorrow, and they soon fly away. See those trees yonder; a few short months and you saw them flourishing with foliage, grateful to the eye, and presently the buds broke forth into a thousand variegated blossoms, while the genial heat of the summer's sun, and the dews and rains of heaven's gift produced abundant fruit. Where now is that fruit? Where now are those buds and blossoms, and the green foliage? They have passed away; and see, those leaves are falling off from the branches, and instead of the beautiful green they have, for lack of strength, assumed the more sickly hue of brown and yellow. Presently the frosts of winter will strip those branches, and nought will soon be left but the leafless tree and lifeless trunk, like the silent mound in the grave-yard, that indicates

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the remains of one in whom life and animation once dwelt, and imparted happiness to the sphere in which he moved. Thus it is with man: in the spring time of life, the opening bud and youthful blossom knows no care, but looks forward to the summer's ripening sun for an abundant crop of happiness, nor once dreams of those casualties which meet us at almost every step: affliction's withering grasp, and a thousand shocks which, like the blighting mildew, blasts the fair prospects of youthful hope and leaves no trace of that bliss which expectation wrought in the young mind."

"Come," said the boatswain, "you know I've not much larning, but I've been overhauling this talk, and if I did'nt know there was no flinch or dodge in you, I should begin to think you were for backing out; why, to be sure, I suppose it is true what you say, but my fashion is to take the world and things as they come; but God knows there is more of the bad than the good, and hark'ee lad, I don't want to take things that's bad upon interest; let them come, and I'll try to make the best on't."

"I know not how it is," observed the young seaman, "but I would rather see that sun this morning, entirely obscured with clouds, and the heavens, which are now so clear, overspread with blackness, and the howling winds beating with fury upon the Cruiser, than the fine circumstances with which we are now surrounded. Ah yes! these circumstances have called up associations in my mind, which have led me to this train of thought and reflection. Yes, from my early days to the present,

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I have never formed any plan for future pleasure, nor have I embarked in any enterprise with prospects fair as these, especially when calculating to a moral certainty that my expectations would be realized; I say then, in all these calculations I have failed to accomplish the object of my pursuit."

Here the conversation was broken off by a general buzz among the crew, caused by the arrival of the pilot, and especially by the order that was communicated to the boatswain to pipe all hands to get under way; all the preparations were therefore made, such as firing the signal gun, hoisting the colors, loosing the fore-topsail, &c. &c. The deck tackle was then stretched fore and aft, the fore-topsail was sheeted home, and hoisted to the mast head, the yards were braced so as to cant the Cruiser to port, and the anchor was hove up to the bow in great spirit, inspired by laughing Jimmy's fife with the national air of "Yankee Doodle." The Cruiser was now under way, and the numerous spectators on the Battery returned three times three to the hearty cheers given by the crew, and soon, very soon, the sound was lost by the increased distance of the Cruiser. The noiseless speed with which she bounded over the waters, down the bay of New York, towards Sandy Hook, under the fore-topsail, jib, and mainsail, astonished and delighted all on board, but more especially the Commander, when it was reported to him that she was now going at the rate of ten knots. The order was immediately given to crack on all the sail she could bear, so as to ascertain her greatest speed. The wind being three

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points on the starboard quarter, and the water perfectly smooth, the order was instantly executed, and every sail was set to advantage that she could bear. The additional canvass increased the rapidity of sailing two knots and a half, as she was running or rather flying over the water twelve knots and a half. The Commander being perfectly satisfied, having ascertained the Cruiser's good qualities for sailing, immediately ordered the canvass to be reduced, and as she was drawing up with Sandy Hook, preparations were being made for discharging the pilot.

The northwest breeze continued to blow with considerable force, and it became necessary to get the pilot off either abreast, or inside of the Hook on account of the heavy swell, which would make it both difficult and dangerous further to seaward. Accordingly when abreast of the light-house, the pilot got safely on board of his boat, and the Cruiser stood out to sea, with a regular look-out at the mast-head.

It may be necessary to remark that in narrating the circumstances connected with a vessel of war, they will be quite different from those of a merchant vessel. In the first place, the former has no certain point of destination, unless it be some cruising ground, or some particular latitude or longitude, which lies in the tracks of vessels sailing to or from different ports; otherwise they cruise where the winds and the weather carry them, or where the peculiar circumstances of the cruise, such as chasing and being chased, may determine their situation. It will of course be seen that they differ essen-

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tially in that regular system of duty always necessary to be executed on board of merchant vessels, for in the latter there is the departure, the log-line, the regular course of a compass, and all advantage taken by the ships, of wind, by keeping on the best tack so as to secure the most favorable result for a quick passage to the destined port. The Cruiser, however, especially in time of war, observes nothing of the routine of duty, maintained on board of the former class of vessels. There is little attention given to the log and less to the courses, and they are generally under short sail, except when chasing or being chased. The greatest attention, however, is given to the loook-out at the mast-head, to ascertaining the best trim for sailing, and disciplining the crew for action in different ways, such as exercising the large guns and small arms, boarding and repelling boarders, and working ship, &c. &c.

The Cruiser of which we now write having no certain point fixed for her cruising ground, that being wholly discretionary with the Commander, stood out to seaward under short sail, with a very scrutinizing look-out, as it had been reported previous to her departure from New York, that there were an English seventy-four and frigate cruising a short distance from the land. It was necessary, therefore, to ascertain if anything was in sight, before the night closed in, so that they might have a port at command in case they should fall in with the English cruisers. The day rolled away, however, without anything material occurring, and as the Cruiser reached off to seaward, the swell became heavier, con-

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sequently the motion of the vessel was more violent, and so unusual was it to the land-tacks of the green hands, that many of them lost their equilibrium. This, however, was a small part of the delicacy of a sea life; for the motion of the vessel, as well as the sea-air and atmosphere, disagreed with the hitherto placid stomachs of the landsmen, so that with the concussion of the fall, the whole contents of many a stomach, which had been well lined that day, were entirely discharged in every direction about the deck. The peculiar make of laughing Jimmy operated very seriously against him, for his short legs obstinately refused to do their office, unless it was at the expense of a contusion in his large head. Jimmy, therefore, taxed his arms and hands to their utmost strength, by holding on to some rope, belaying pin, or any thing upon which he could fix his grasp. Poor Jimmy! he was, indeed, an object of mirth to the old salts, for his risibility now entirely forsook him, as he had an unusual share of that which falls to the lot of green hands, viz. sea-sickness.

"Why don't you get that squeaking whistle and drive away your melancholy?" said an old sailor. "Let Jimmy alone," said another, "don't you see he's just going to balance his accounts?" "Grease your pins," said a third, "it will make them supple to have another jig with the cook's mate." As the last speaker finished his stroke of wit, no doubt Jimmy thought of the rapid double shuffle, impelled by the power of his music, for his melancholy face relaxed into a broad grin, but the delicate state of Jimmy's health at that moment

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could not withstand the muscular distortion of his risibilities; the consequence was a severe concussion about the region of the stomach, and Nature, always true, if not thwarted by the will, relieved the organ by emptying its contents, the greater part of which unfortunately fell upon the last-mentioned speaker.

"Avast there!" bellowed out the old sailor in a tone of fury; "why did'nt you give that little opening of yours more rake to port?"

The mirth which had heretofore been spent upon Jimmy was now completely transferred over to the old salt, who, not possessing the same equanimity as the fifer, squared away for a fight.

Our tall friend, (whom we shall introduce by the appellation of "Major," that being the name given by the crew,) was also made sergeant of marines. He, too, had lost much of that bold front which had characterized his first appearance on board, as he now shared largely in the prevailing epidemic, and his fierce countenance had relapsed into the meekness and gentleness of a lamb. There were none of the green hands who escaped the disease of the sea to such an extent as the young man who came on board in long clothes. He being thin, and of a spare habit, the bracing air and violent motion of the vessel did not take the same effect upon him as on the others. The only change that he had as yet made in his dress, was to substitute a round-a-bout for the long coat. He therefore went by the name of "pantaloon Jack."

The night had now closed in, and the northwest breeze

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freshened; consequently the sea rose, increasing the violent motion of the Cruiser, and although under short sail, she bounded over the waves to the eastward at a rapid rate, heaving the dashing spray fore and aft. And now, for the first time, the green hands, who had their hammocks slung in the vicinity of the gratings, found out by the current of wind that rushed down, as well as the cooling spray which fell occasionally into their hammocks, that the old sailors, to use their own expression, "had their eye teeth cut;" for they would gladly have exchanged berths, though it might be at the expense of breathing in a confined atmosphere.

The berth-deck, as well as the main deck, now presented a melancholy, and yet, in some respects, a truly ludicrous scene. On the former, what with the bawling of the old sailors, the sickness of the green hands, and the confusion occasioned by the mess-kids, tin-pots, boxes and bags of clothing rolling from side to side, caused by the great motion of the Cruiser, now laboring heavily, produced an uproar almost equal to the elements above them: while on the latter, that is, the main deck, the indomitables, highbinders, and cookey-boys, whose courage was now laid low, were strewed in every direction about the main deck and forecastle, regardless of the spray which poured over them at every bound of the Cruiser. It was very justly observed by the boatswain, that it would be fortunate not to fall in with the enemy (considering the helpless condition of the crew,) until they got their jackets well lined with salt beef and biscuit, and could manage a pair of sea-legs

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CHAPTER VIII.

DESCRIPTION OF THE OFFICERS, THE FORCE OF THE CRUISER, THE CHASE, ETC.

Two or three days passed away without any thing material transpiring. The weather became fine, the wind moderated, and the sea was comparatively smooth. The Cruiser, like a bird of the ocean that had been fatigued by the fury of a tempest, now resting itself on the bosom of the wave, or flying slowly above its surface, was impelled gradually along by the small quantity of sail that was set. The violent motion too had ceased, a circumstance not a little gratifying to all those who had been visited by the sea malady, many of whom now began to appear like creatures of life and animation, having taken on board, (as the old salts expressed it,) a good cargo of substantials, instead of the fresh grub which had all been disposed of, and now that their ribs began to be well lined with salt beef, pork, and biscuit, they would soon be fit for duty.

It was certainly a little remarkable, that notwithstanding the great proportion of green hands that composed this crew, and the universal prevalence of the

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sea-sickness among them, in three days it almost entirely disappeared, as the provisions could testify, were they gifted with the powers of speech; and this was a source of great satisfaction, especially as it became necessary to discipline them in the management of the large guns, small arms, repel boarders, &c. It is true, when orders were given to board on the starboard side, they were quite likely to scamper away to port, and although there was not a small number that had learned the art of pugilism, or that had some experience in this genteel avocation, yet in the science of naval combat, (as it might be expected,) they were as ignorant, (to use the expression of the boatswain,) as "a squad of raw country militia." It is certain their mistakes and awkwardness procured for them a very liberal supply of oaths and execrations, as well as frequent repetitions of the same duty. Perhaps there was none made less allowance for these raw recruits than the Commander of the Cruiser. It seems that he and the present second lieutenant were all now on board, who were in her the last cruise, the present Commander having been promoted for his courage and intrepidity on the first cruise; but it was very generally rumored on board, that although his valor was undoubted, and that he would not flinch to engage a superior force, yet he manifested but little prudence, precipitation being the prominent trait in his character; and it led him into many irretrievable errors. With such a man, therefore, although he was actually a superior officer as second in command, yet with the entire

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control of the Cruiser, it may be supposed that a profitable and successful cruise was exceedingly doubtful, nevertheless, even these unfortunate traits in his character would not have been a matter of serious moment, but he was headstrong, his actions were governed by sudden impulses, and although none solicited more frequently the exercise of the judgment and advice of the officers, yet not in a single instance did their decision or opinion influence him, even if in some respects it coincided with his own. His character had already become manifest by his impatience and spleen toward the undisciplined crew; but the first lieutenant, by his long experience, was not only well calculated to train the men with a regular system of discipline, but also to make those necessary allowances for inexperience, without which an officer will not command respect and obedience.

The first lieutenant therefore, was in all respects opposite in his character to the Commander, possessing equal bravery, yet tempered with a superior judgment and a determined coolness which no circumstance, even if it were full of peril and danger, could in the least shake.

Of the other lieutenants it may be necessary merely to state that they were good sort of fellows, without any very peculiar traits in their character to designate them from seamen of their rank and station; not so, however, with the sailing master, — he was one of your cool, calculating, and, I may add, close and mercenary sons of the Eastern States; it was generally said of him that he

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was born the other side of sunrise. Previously to the war he had commanded a lumber drogher to the West Indies from Kennebunk, and would often boast how much he had made on his "venter of potatoes and onions, but as the British had cut up all that business by the blasted war, (to use his own expression,) he was now determined to have revenge and try a little fighting." This immortal captain, who was all for fighting, but a little more for the pocket, had a wonderful curiosity to get sight of a British vessel, "but then," as he expressed himself, "it would be a pity to fall in with an enemy well armed, for in that case the Cruiser might get riddled and thus spoil the cruise." But it somehow or other got afloat in the ward-room, that the sailing master would rather sell venters, or raft pine lumber on shore at Point Petre, than hear the whizzing of a shot, or be concerned in any such a scrape. Now whether there was any cause for this opinion is not positively known; at all events, an old prize-master having had some previous acquaintance with him, set these rumors afloat. There was another very serious difficulty with the sailing master, and that was to keep the exact position of the Cruiser, for as he was not a very learned mathematician or navigator — the extent of his knowledge being confined to traverse sailing, or working up a meridian altitude of the sun — of course it may be supposed, especially as the Cruiser was on a variety of courses during the twenty-four hours, besides little attention being given to the log, that it was altogether, as he frequently declared, a rather knotty subject to get

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hold of. Yet he had a remarkable talent for guessing, for when it blew violently or rained in torrents, he would say, "I guess it blows," or "I guess it rains." This propensity, (especially when the day's work had many courses and alterations in it,) led him to note in the log-book in conspicuous letters the following sentence, viz. "I guess she is in the longitude of ——," and concluded by saying, "Nothing done these twenty four hours." Now whatever may have been his talents for a scientific navigator, he was certainly a good schooner sailer, for the plain reason, that he never sailed in or commanded any other class of vessels, in his sojourn on the ocean. On board of this craft, he observed, "I am at home, if it were not for that back-breaker," (meaning the lug foresail,) to which he proposed an alteration, but was argued out of the idea by the prize-masters, who contended it would make the Cruiser "look like a Connecticut horse jockey."

But I shall leave the sailing-master for the present, and present the reader to the lieutenant of marines. This gentleman was little known on board the Cruiser, but from his deportment it was generally thought he had been a country lawyer, or teacher of a seminary. Be this as it may, his address was far above the common herd; he had also the gift of speech, was pretty sound in argument, a talent that he used to much advantage, besides he had a superior tact in making friends, which he did with all the officers of the ward-room. But although he had this tact, yet it was said of him, (with some color of truth,) that he was neither sailor

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nor soldier, and as to his courage, that was yet to be proved; but as for his military tactics, he might not be unaptly compared to the Captain Bunker of Down East, — however, in matters of drill and exercise, they were generally conducted by our tall friend the major, or sergeant, if you please, except on some very particular occasion, such as inspection day; in that case the lieutenant went through the drill, and the sergeant acted as fugleman.

The prize-masters were a set of jolly fellows, generally men in middle and more advanced stages of life, with but two exceptions, and these two were young, active, bold seamen, in whom confidence might be reposed, and to use the boatswain's opinion, "there was no backing out in them." The six former, (for there were eight prize-masters in all,) generally loved a glass of grog, could spin a long yarn, and sing a song occasionally, that is, when they were half-seas over, (which, by the way, was not unfrequent;) and in these merry moods their fortune was secured. They also considered themselves to be equal in rank and station to the commander of any merchant vessel, frequently averring, that they would have charge of the quarter-deck and cabin, of some gallant ship, before the cruise was over. It must be conceded that these were old seamen, and understood their duty, and if their conduct corresponded with their profession, there would be no good reason to doubt their courage.

But I pause to introduce the surgeon, or non-combatant, as he was generally styled. This gentleman

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had finished his study by a course of three months' reading in a doctor's shop, and three months' attendance to a course of lectures, in a neighboring medical college, after which, from his most profound research and giant intellect, he obtained a diploma, and was actually installed by the learned professors with an M. D., and upon these two ominous letters he set up business for himself. Now it was generally thought, from his peculiar absence of mind, that he had been disappointed in love, but the more thinking part of the crew attributed it probably to the right cause, viz. disappointment in practice, for although in his first setting out he had made a very brilliant show, having no less than a half dozen signs on his office, nevertheless he could not succeed in obtaining business, for somehow or other it got out, that he used one sovereign remedy for every disease, so that the few unfortunate patients whom he had were soon despatched. His merit was totally neglected, and as a finish to the ill luck of this ill-fated man, in performing a surgical operation, the amputation of a limb, he neglected to take up several of the arteries, and his patient bled to death; this was a death-blow to all his practice, in consequence of which he had well nigh starved to death. But now as the war was in operation, he said it was a grand theatre for action and the exercise of merit, calculating at the same time the chances of filling his pockets. Being elevated by these views, he made up his mind to embark in the wars, as was evident from his common declaration:

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"I'll to the ocean rock,
Make ready for the slaughter;
I'll a fortune make,
Or drown in salt water."

This fiery determination was put into execution, and he continued to be a man of one remedy, for on all occasions, and in all kind of diseases on board, the universal restorative was a pint of salt water. This remedy was excellent on two accounts. First, it was easy of access, and secondly, it was cheap, a thing to be duly considered, with so large a crew, especially if the cruise should be long. Now although salt water was a favorite remedy with the doctor, yet he had a mortal aversion to the idea of foundering, sinking, or drowning, for when these matters were discussed, he was always seized with a violent excitement, which very much provoked the mirth of the ward-room officers, who on these occasions comforted him by saying that he should not be afraid of his own medicine chest. This man, or rather an apology for a man, this Doctor Sangrado, may be conceived (that is, his appearance,) by the reader, to be like unto the apothecary so inimitably described by Shakspeare.

So much then for the description of the officers of the Cruiser, of two hundred and eighty tons, schooner rigged, long, low, with beautiful proportions, which sailed fast, mounting twelve eighteen pound carronades, and a long eighteen pounder on a pivot amidships, with a complement of one hundred and twenty men.

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Several days elapsed, and nothing was seen. The impatience of the Commander was manifested by many outbreaks of temper, but the most perfect equanimity of the first lieutenant was exhibited by his cheerfulness, well knowing that as yet no time was lost, for this delay was the cause of better discipline, which must, (if any thing would,) ensure success in action. However they were not doomed to lead this monotonous life any length of time, and in truth the crew began to be wearied and longed for excitement.

While all hands were at dinner, discussing heartily the merits of pea soup, the exciting cry was heard from the look-out aloft, of "Sail ho!" "Where away?" said the officer of the watch. "Right ahead," replied the look-out. In a few moments all was excitement and commotion. All hands being called immediately, every yard of canvass was spread that could be set to advantage, and the Cruiser was hauled to, the wind being from the eastward. The round grape and cannister shot, in a word, every thing connected with the armament in a few moments were ready for action. The gunner undressed his favorite piece, viz. "Long Tom," for which he had conceived a strong regard, and of course it was kept in high order; in truth it was a noble piece, and would send a shot, if properly discharged, as far as any cannon, without regard to calibre. After these preparations were made, all hands were summoned to their stations and quarters, the screens were let down, fires out, gratings on, matches lit, and the carronades secured by the tackles, and the breechings

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cast loose, to prevent any impediment in case of emergency.

The second lieutenant was now ordered aloft with the glass to watch the stranger, and after a few moments' inspection, reported her to be a ship standing to the eastward. In a few minutes, however, he reported in a hurried tone, that the stranger had hauled close up to the wind on the starboard tack, and was nearing fast. This was not very agreeable news, for in these perilous times, it was very evident that no merchant vessel would have acted in this way; the conclusion was therefore, that she must be a man-of-war; and the Commander observed, that it would not do to run until that fact was ascertained to a certainty; but as a necessary precaution the square-sail, studding-sail gear, and all the light sails were immediately got in readiness, because the Cruiser's best sailing was off the wind. It may be supposed that the relative distance between the two was soon lessened; in a quarter of an hour the hull of the stranger was distinctly seen from the deck of the Cruiser, and it became a matter of some doubt whether or not the ship would not cross the bow of the Cruiser to windward. The Commander, intently looking at her with the glass, observed to the first lieutenant:

"She is a large ship of great length, with square yards, under a press of canvass — appears too dark for an American, and by H—ns, she is no laggard!"

This was certainly true, for although the Cruiser dashed through the water at a rapid rate, she could not

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possibly pass more than half gun shot to windward of the ship.

"Gunner," said the Commander, "get Long Tom ready, and we'll have some conversation with the stranger as she passes by."

"Aye, aye," said the gunner, who seemed perfectly delighted, for he was an old man-of-war's-man, and had been waiting some time for this order. The cartridges for Long Tom had been made by himself, and as he had tried its power, he knew to a fraction what amount of powder was necessary, and he allowed no other man to charge Long Tom when coming into action but himself. Long Tom was therefore carefully loaded, and as the ship drew up toward the beam, all doubt in reference to her character was dispelled, for the bunting displaying St. George's cross was run up to her peak, and simultaneously her shot came whizzing through the air, and passed astern of the Cruiser. The gunner now became impatient, and as the ship altered her position, just so he changed the position of Long Tom, that he might be ready to talk when within speaking distance.

English colors were hoisted at the peak of the Cruiser, but it was of no avail. The frigate, for such she was, showed her signals, which could not be answered, and as she ranged as far as the counter of the Cruiser, she hove in stays on the larboard tack, in the act of which, her forward division was sent after the Cruiser, to compliment her for the politeness of keeping company. The shot, however, fell harmless, and as the chase was astern, every shot that was fired from the

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enemy increased the distance between the two. The frigate of course being aware of this, kept a profound silence for some time. She was now under a crowd of sail, standing on the same tack, bearing about two points on the Cruiser's quarter, and bounding through the water like an unchecked fiery courser, goaded to madness by the lash.

From the great disparity of force and the proximity of the two, the safety of the Cruiser now depended entirely upon her speed. Any error therefore in her management would be irretrievable and ensure capture. Consequently the most intense anxiety prevailed, and the most scrutinizing bearings were taken. The result was that the frigate rather head-reached, but the Cruiser laying a point higher and holding a better wind, gained to windward of the chase. The unanimous opinion, therefore, was to work the Cruiser to windward by short tacks, and as there was yet four hours' daylight, the relative sailing of the two would be correctly ascertained, so that if it were probable that the frigate would overhaul her, then after night closed in, the Cruiser might, under its cover, elude the vigilance of the enemy. "We will now go about," said the Commander to the first lieutenant. The crew were immediately at their stations, the helm was put down, and the Cruiser ranged up gallantly head to wind and forged ahead at least one hundred yards directly in the wind's eye, without losing her way; when all the sheets and yards were hauled simultaneously, and the Cruiser filled away on the starboard tack. "By H—ns," said

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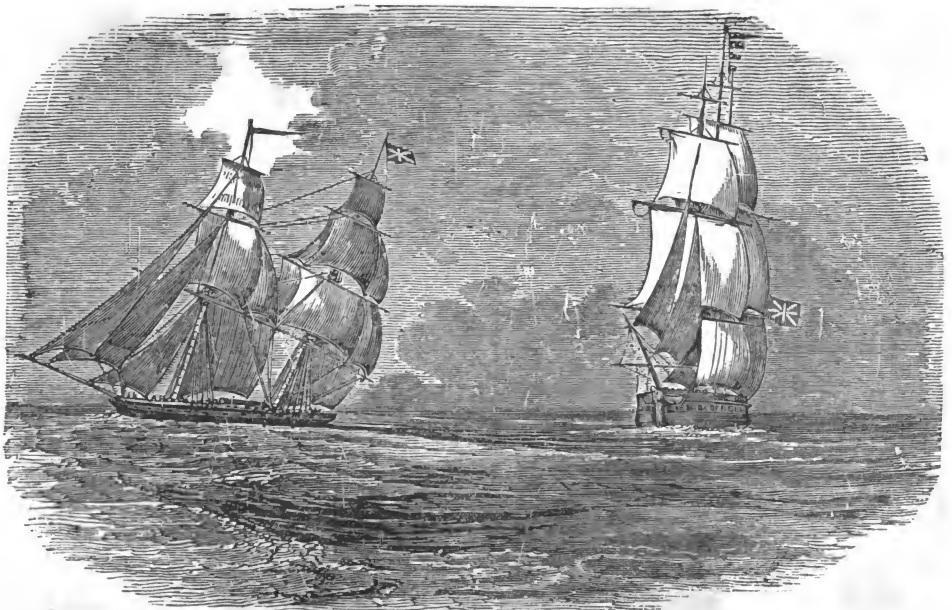

Escape from a British Frigate.

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the Commander, "she behaves nobly; a half dozen boards like this, and we shall give the Englishman a description of Long Tom without danger." In a few minutes the look-out at the mast-head reported that the frigate was in stays. The report was unnecessary to establish the fact, for a broad sheet of flame was seen issuing from her starboard bow, and the shot whizzed through the air some distance astern of the Cruiser.

"Well, well," said the gunner, "if Long Tom gets the liberty of speech to-day, he'll not use such high flown talk. You had better save your powder and shot, for it is a great thing sometimes to save money and credit too. Besides, you'll want all your ammunition if you fall in with Old Ironsides."

"This is a most splendid chase," said the first lieutenant, after he had been gazing steadfastly at the frigate for the last ten minutes. "Yes," continued he, "she moves through the water like a race-horse, and my word for't, if we were now the same distance under her lee, as we are to windward, our chance of escape would be small indeed; but if no shot cuts away any of our sticks, and the breeze holds on until night, we shall be far out of the reach of his gun. The whole crew were now ordered to walk round the decks, short tacks were made, and it soon became evident that the Cruiser was leaving the chase astern. The movement of the crew increased her speed, and by the short tacks, gained fast to windward. The frigate, seeing this, opened a brisk fire, but it was too late, for the Cruiser was nearly out of gun-shot.

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"We will now show him," said the Commander, "the stars and stripes, so bend on the bunting, quartermaster; and gunner," continued he, "don't you think Long Tom can give that Englishman a piece of advice?"

"Aye, aye, sir," replied the gunner; "Tom's a faithful messenger, and will carry the advice as straight as a loon's leg."

"Are you ready with the colors there?" inquired the Commander. The answer was in the affirmative.

"Well then, haul the British flag down, and run up the Yankee bunting."

The gunner was now assiduously engaged in elevating, depressing, and pointing Long Tom, sometimes aft, and sometimes forward, until he obtained an exact direction, then patting the gun most affectionately on its breech, said in a low tone, "now Tom, do your duty this once."

"Are you ready?" inquired the Commander. The gunner took another squint, then depressed the muzzle, keeping his eye on the elevation, and sung out, "All ready, sir."

"Fire!"

For a few moments the Cruiser was enveloped in smoke, and the gunner, leaping on one of the carronades, rubbed his eyes, and then directed them toward the frigate. In a moment his eye brightened up, he took off his cap, gave three cheers, and flung it as far as he could in the direction of the enemy: "There, pick that up," said he, "as you come along, and you'll have a Yankee prize to pay for your jib-boom," for sure enough the shot from Long Tom had cut it away. The

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loss of the jib made it difficult to keep the frigate out of the wind, consequently they were obliged to take in the spanker. With the diminution of these two important sails, especially on a wind, the frigate dropped to leeward rapidly, so that by sunset she was far out of gunshot.

Night closed in. The Cruiser lost sight of the frigate. the crew remained at their quarters until midnight; the guns were then secured, the watch was set, and the vessel steered off to the eastward.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE YOUNG SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE COMMENCED. ALL HANDS TO MISCHIEF, ETC

THE blue waves rolled along at a moderate height after the Cruiser, as she bounded over their surface, impelled by the northern breeze that swelled the whitened canvass, which gave her an air of consciousness. Lightly she rose on the top of the white-crested billow, unimpeded, as if driven along by some power of enchantment, or like an ocean bird, spreading her enormous wings, with rapid flight to seek a more congenial clime.

As the shades of night disappeared, and the morning light broke forth, the opening day might have roused the most stoical indifference; nought was visible to the eye, upon the unbounded waste of waters, except the Cruiser, which seemed like a spirit-bird, soaring o'er the vast expanse in profound, unbroken silence. The sun rose clear, and when half the disc appeared above the horizon, a thousand variegated hues skirted the gorgeous clouds which rolled up, and seemed to vanish away before the refulgent beams of the king of day, as he majestically ascended into the azure vault to perform his daily round.

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It was eight o'clock, A. M. The customary duties of the morning watch had been performed, the decks were cleared, the canvass was trimmed to the breeze, and the Cruiser was running off to the eastward, as it was determined that the cruising ground should include all the space between the Azores and the Madeira Islands, so as to intercept the traders bound to the West Indies and South America. All the officers had assembled on the quarter deck, the greater part of the crew were lounging about the booms and main-deck, and the countenances of all hands beamed with the highest satisfaction, especially on the quarter-deck, as they conversed freely in reference to the chase of the preceding day.

"I never saw this craft during the whole of last cruise behave so well on a wind as she did yesterday. We certainly could not have had her trim, for in every close chase, the object was to get her off the wind, for only in this way could we depend on her sailing."

"In my opinion," replied the first lieutenant, "after her performances yesterday, in any and every chase we may have this cruise from men-of-war, our safest place is to keep the weather-guage, and work to windward by short tacks." The merits of the crew, and their good conduct was next discussed.

"I believe," observed the Commander, "we shall have no reason to doubt the courage of our lads; I saw little flinching, and but few pale faces; but the coolness and general good conduct of the young friend of the boatswain's, were most striking and entitled

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him to the respect of all the officers on board; for it is evident that he is worthy of a higher station, than that which he now has."

"Yes sir," replied the first lieutenant, "his activity and semanship, his education and gentlemanly deportment, and withal his bravery, as I have been informed by his friend, the boatswain, deserve a higher rank than that of a fore-mast Jack on board the Cruiser."

"If this cruise should prove successful," replied the Commander, "he shall be promoted, and yet I understand he is so inseparably united to his friend, that he would not accept of promotion, if it should be the cause of their separation."

"No sir," said the first lieutenant; "there must be something mysterious in the history of this young man, something that seems to be full of chivalry and romance, and as I am informed he is the foremost to signalize himself in every perilous adventure, and would not hesitate, in the most daring service, to be the first at either boarding, cutting out, or in close action with the enemy. He seeks not wealth, for he estimates it as a sordid passion; but then there is something to which he seems constantly aspiring, some object to be attained, to which all his energies and powers are directed; and in truth, in my judgment, he is a valuable acquisition to this cruiser, as well as his friend the boatswain, whom I consider to be the best seaman on board, and one, too, in whom are combined all those noble traits of character which constitute a true-hearted mariner."

The day passed off in the greatest good humor, and

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as the crew had behaved so well on the previous day, it was determined, in order to keep up the excitement, to give a loose rein to discipline for two or three hours, and pipe all hands to mischief.

And here it may be proper to explain the reason why this is resorted to on board of men-of-war in general. It is to impart relaxation, both to the mind and body, from that constant severity of discipline which seems to be necessary where there are so large a number of men, thrown together in the small space contained in a vessel of war of any description. It is necessary that discipline should be maintained for the greater security of the vessel and officers, as well as order and system when called into action; on the other hand, a little relaxation from this severity is thought to be necessary, to relieve the mind from that pressure which often is in opposition to the will, and thus, as it were, impart a kind of freedom for a short time at least, which is the birthright of all men, and to which all men are constantly aspiring. The method, then, of carrying this into execution, is by giving up the main-deck and forecastle to the entire control of the crew, to spend three or four hours in such unbridled pleasures as their ingenuity and trickery may suggest. It is doubtful, however, whether or not these licensed privileges are advantageous, because serious difficulties have arisen, and in some cases, mutiny has been the result.

Be this as it may, at 3, P. M. all hands were piped to mischief, and a scene ensued which baffles description. There was singing, dancing, swearing, and fight-

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ing. The old salts were running with bowlines, in which they caught the green horns, and would trice them up to the lower mast-head, to the no small annoyance of the sufferer; while others by the same purchase, drew water aloft, which was soused upon those on deck. Some had a bucket of tar thrown over them; others were well greased from the slush-barrel. These last tricks were borne with a very ill grace, and yet it was of little use, for in every instance it brought down a double portion of suffering to any who offered resistance. This buffoonery lasted until some of the heroes of the Five Points lost all their patience, and some half-dozen clubbing together, assumed an attitude of defiance, and sided out for a regular knock-down. This closed the scene of mischief, and never was any license given for a similar repetition during the remainder of the cruise.

Order being restored and the first dog-watch over, the hour of supper was spent in unalloyed enjoyment, with a regular set-to of long yarns, which was not concluded until eight bells, when the watch was set. It was a fine star-light night, and the sea, although not smooth, was following and regular, and as the wind was in the quarter, the Cruiser glided over the blue billows steadily, at a rapid rate. The noiseless speed of the Cruiser and the peculiar stillness and beauty of the night, together with the almost profound silence of the crew, (more than half of whom were lost in sleep,) produced an air of solemnity, and a kind of melancholy pleasure, that loves to dwell on scenes of by-gone days.

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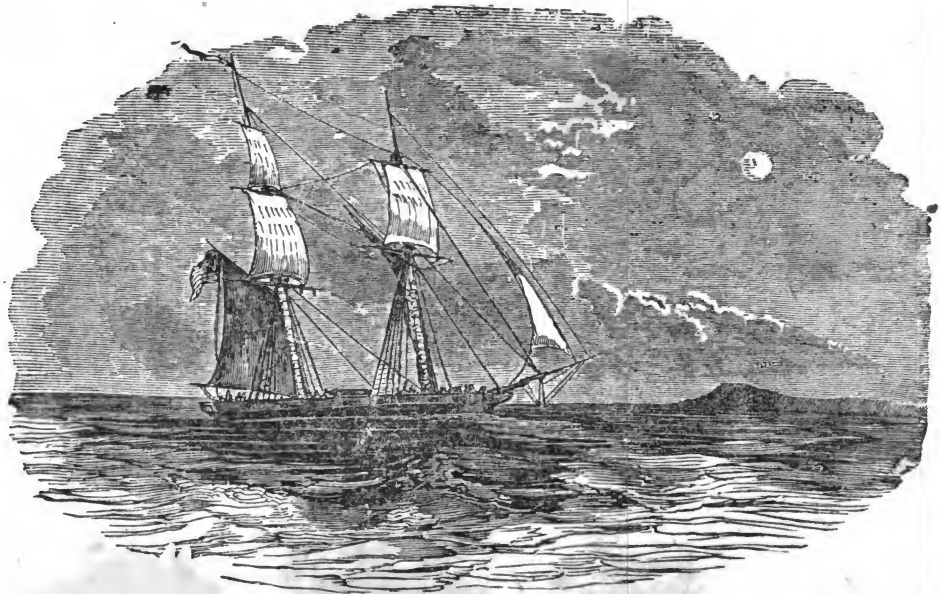

The Cruiser off Madeira, by Moonlight.

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"I have often," observed the young seaman, as he and the boatswain were conversing together on the main-deck, "before I embarked on an ocean life, dwelt with rapture on the pleasure of beholding a scene like this; but now its frequency has thrown a shade over its beauty; and yet there is, even now, a kind of congeniality in the scene before us and my feelings, and although the past brings with it emotions of sorrow, yet the present indescribable satisfaction and pleasure, (though mournful in their character,)—in the reflection, that now I have a friend whose heart will not only sympathize with me, but one also in whom I can repose with the greatest confidence all my sorrows,—relieves the load which bears so heavily upon my heart of half its weight, by the friendship that unites us together.

"My history, then," continued the young seaman, "is short though eventful, and I had long since determined to confine it to my own bosom; but apart from those deep obligations which I owe to you, there is that in your character which I believed only to be found in fiction. I mean disinterested friendship, actuated by no sordid principle. Besides, there is a secret pleasure that with you, I shall run out the glass of life, and although I am your junior in point of age, yet I have a foreboding that my voyage will be short."

"Come, come," said the boatswain, "if your yarn gives you so much pain to spin it out, why then just cut it off short, and we'll be true messmates and sailors still"

"No," replied the young seaman firmly, "you shall have it all."

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"On the morning of our departure from New York, I told you that my education was all that wealth and indulgent affection could bestow. Alas! those revered ones which now sleep the sleep of death, they were but too indulgent to their only son. I was deprived of nothing that could minister to comfort and pleasure; they saw with a parent's eye; the merit or demerit of my actions was settled with a parent's fondness and prejudice; the society in which I moved was of the highest rank and fashion, and my doating father and fond mother supplied all my extravagances with princely munificence. I became so deeply involved in dissipation and high life, that I lost all resources of pleasure in myself, and even in the society of those parents who would have sacrificed their lives and fortunes to have promoted my happiness. They did not upbraid me. They listened not to the frequent reports that were made to them, of the alarming outbreaks in my conduct. In vain they strove to call my attention to one of the learned professions; in vain they sought by a thousand endearments to divert the current of my thoughts into a proper channel. They endeavored in a variety of ways to render my home the most agreeable place; the most polished company, both male and female, were frequently invited to my father's mansion. In this way they succeeded for a time, but alas! that which my honored parents supposed would bring about a reformation, was the cause of my ruin.

"Our house was in a short time celebrated for learning, wit, fashion, and female accomplishments, so that

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all who made any pretensions to such acquirements sought eagerly for an introduction to this brilliant circle. It cannot be supposed therefore, that the numerous female visitors of so much beauty and fashion, would pass by me unheeded; neither can it be supposed, that all the gentlemen who resorted to my father's house were of the character before described. No, the man of the world, the fortune hunter, the disguised gambler, all were there; unfortunately their true characters were not disclosed, in time to prevent the mischief this kind of society is always likely to produce.

"Among those who frequented our circle, was the daughter of a merchant formerly in affluent circumstances; misfortune, however, beyond his control, had reduced his finances to a moderate competency. Previously to the wreck of his fortune, he had bestowed on his lovely daughter an education of the highest order. To a form sufficiently tall, she combined the most exact proportions of figure, with features that defied the most scrupulous criticism. Her dark auburn hair played in graceful ringlets over a neck of snow-white softness. Her forehead was high and strongly marked with intelligence, which exhibited to great advantage her arched eyebrow, and soft blue eyes. Her nose was aquiline, and from between a pair of ruby lips was seen a set of teeth regular and white as the most polished ivory, with cheeks that blushed at the praise of their own loveliness; but although her exterior was such as to captivate every eye, yet her mind was in perfect consonance

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with her person. She was fluent in all the polite languages, conversant with their best authors, ready in historical learning; but that in which she excelled mostly was a thorough knowledge of the history of her own country. She had an exquisite taste, and sound judgment, was remarkable for judicious selections, and her knowledge of the fine arts, painting, poetry, and music, was respectable. Indeed the tones which she produced from her skill on the piano, would have thrilled even the fastidious and musical ear of Paganini. Her carriage was so graceful and elegant, that she compelled every beholder at least to admire and respect, if not to love. Was it possible, therefore, in the society of such a lovely creature to be cold and indifferent? No, no, the frosts of many winters must have whitened the head, and furrowed the cheeks of that being, who would look upon so much beauty and worth, and not love."

"Why, lad," said the boatswain, "while you've been spinning this yarn I've been in love with her myself for more than half a glass, and I don't much wonder at such a tight chap as you are striking your colors to such a handsome frigate; but come, lad, go on with your yarn, I'd rather hear it than about the Revolution, Lord North, or Captain Kidd; for I was once in pretty much such a fix, but an East India cruise washed it all away."

The young seaman proceeded as follows:

"At first the powers of conversation, and other elegant accomplishments, produced a strong desire to be frequently in her company, which I believed grew en-

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tirely out of respect for her talents; but soon, very soon, I found a passion kindling in my heart which was impossible to mistake, and before I was aware of it I was deeply in love."

Just as the young seaman had rounded off the foregoing sentence, the helmsman sung out eight bells. They were astonished when they perceived the hours had passed off so rapidly. The young seaman promised to conclude his history at some favorable opportunity, and then turned in for the night.

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CHAPTER X.

CHASE, ENGAGEMENT, CAPTURE OF A BRITISH BRIG, ETC.

SEVERAL days elapsed and nothing transpired worthy of note. A constant succession of fair winds, and a press of canvass drove the Cruiser rapidly towards the appointed cruising ground. She had now been cruising for some time, and as yet, nothing of interest, or at least of profit, had marked the cruise, and the officers grew weary of the dull monotony which this loss of time created, such was the enormous expenditure of provisions and water, that they were fearful it might be necessary to replenish before any thing was effected; the crew complained of their ill luck, and some of the old salts affirmed roundly, and with great seriousness that there must be a Jonah on board.

Now as none of the crew had a very great affection for the Major, (and the reason was simply that he could take his own part, and did so upon all occasions,) the lot fell upon him, and it was unanimously agreed, that unless they fell in with something very soon, the unfortunate Major must be the cause, and therefore they treated him Jonah fashion as they termed it; this most superstitious and unjust suspicion was however overruled, for

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the safety of the Major, the credit of the crew, and restoration of good feeling with all on board; for while they were discussing this subject, the cry of "sail ho!" was reported from the mast-head. Fifty human beings simultaneously started upon their feet, and "sail ho" was repeated from almost every voice fore and aft the Cruiser. After the customary inquiries from the officer of the deck, the stranger was reported to be four points on the lee bow, standing to the southward, and at a great distance off; although the boatswain wound his call to summons all hands on deck to make sail, yet this order was unnecessary, for every man was excited when the cry was heard, and all were straining their eyes to get a look at the strange sail. In a few minutes the Cruiser bore up and was under a cloud of canvass, in chase of the stranger. A "stern-chase," however, always appears to be a long chase; so in this case, for it was nearly an hour before the stranger could be seen from the deck of the Cruiser. Now as there was but six hours daylight, it became a matter of doubt whether the character of the stranger could be ascertained. However, the next hour, the Cruiser came up with the chase so rapidly, that the head of the top-gallant sails were seen from the deck. The stranger was scrutinized long and anxiously by the Commander, after which he observed, "I believe by the appearance of those short yards and taut masts, that she must be an Englishman; no doubt a running vessel bound to the Brazils, well manned and armed, and she sails well."

By this time the courses of the brig were distinctly

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seen, but there were two hours more daylight. "She is at least six miles off," said the Commander, "and we must gain three miles per hour, if we overhaul her before dark. Quarter-master, heave the log?" This order was instantly obeyed, and she was reported to have run off eleven knots and a half.

"Long Tom will be in speaking distance before dark," said the Commander.

"It may be," replied the first lieutenant; "but is it your intention to engage her in the night, especially before we ascertain to what nation she belongs, for it is certain we shall not be able to designate her colors before night."

This opinion was corroborated by the remainder of the officers, and after some consultation they unanimously agreed to keep the brig close aboard during the night, and engage her early the next morning. Before night set in, the Cruiser was about half a mile distance from the brig, and it became necessary to shorten sail, in order to keep astern of the chase. The opinion of the first lieutenant was correct; for although colors were seen at the brig's peak, yet it was impossible to make them out.

All hands were ordered to lay at their quarters during the night, and every preparation was made for action in the morning. It was a clear, starlight night, and the brig was under a cloud, although the Cruiser kept away, with her foresails within musket shot. Not a sound was heard save now and then the creaking blocks from the brig as she rolled over the waves,

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dashing the foam on the bows of the Cruiser. The stars shone brilliantly, and reflected a variety of twinkling images on the deep blue ocean. It was a splendid chase. Now the Cruiser would range so close that her jib-boom was almost over the taffrail of the brig; and yet the most profound silence was kept on both sides, for the reasons that the officers of the Cruiser were confident that their neighbor was an Englishman.

"That's a bold chap," said the boatswain to the young seaman, "and if he fights that brig to-morrow, as stubborn as he has sailed her to-day, why I'll miss my reck'ning if we do n't have pretty sharp work before her colors are down; for look there, lad, she's a long craft, and to my mind she's a pretty good row of teeth."

Towards morning the wind moderated, and by some unaccountable negligence, the brig was suffered to range two miles ahead, and when daylight appeared, she bore nearly on the beam, so that it brought the Cruiser close to the wind. It was not long, however, before she came within gun-shot, and the stars and stripes were displayed, which was immediately answered by showing the British flag. At the same time she took in all her light sails, hauled up her courses and prepared for action. For a few moments the two vessels run abeam of each other.

"Now," said the Commander of the Cruiser, "we will let Long Tom carry a message to John Bull Gunner, are you ready?"

"Aye, aye, sir."

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"Don't cripple her spars, for we must send her in without delay."

The order was given to fire. As soon as the smoke cleared away, the brig returned this friendly salutation, by pouring in a broadside from six nine pounders, which did no other damage, except two of the shot passed through the mainsail. Long Tom was again carefully loaded, and as there was no particular order given, the old gunner thought his darling Tom would be a faithful messenger this time; and so it was in fact, for the next shot struck the brig amidships, wounding several men, and shattered her launch. A brisk fire was kept up from the brig with considerable effect. The rigging and sails of the Cruiser were much damaged. The Englishman, however, had nothing to boast of.

"We must engage him," said the Commander, "at close quarters, for he will not strike that British flag until the last hope fails."

The Cruiser was luffed up across the bow of the enemy, perceiving which, the brig bore up for a raking fire. This was an unfortunate mistake, for the Cruiser had greatly the advantage of sailing, consequently she soon got a weather-guage, and chose a position which was used to great effect.

The action now became terrible, for the two were engaged at pistol shot distance. The carronades of the Cruiser poured a most galling and murderous fire into the enemy; nor was the Englishman slack in returning the compliment, for a pretty equal average was made in the loss of the rigging, spars, &c., on both sides.

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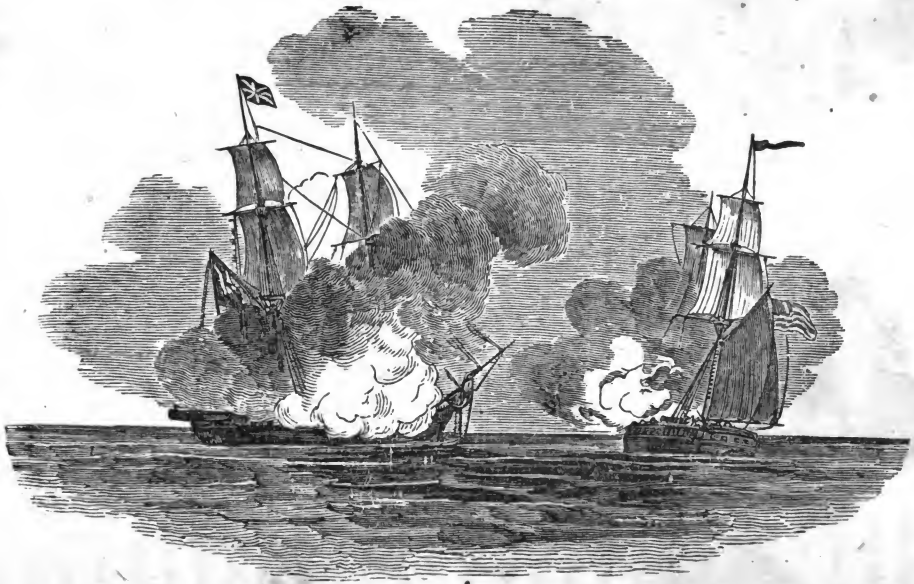

Capture of a British Brig. **p. 117**

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Thus far three men were killed and severa wounded in the Cruiser, and the remainder, wrought up to fury, were clamorous to board the enemy. Long Tom was put in requisition, and the practised eye of the gunner directing the messenger, it cut away the Englishman's foreyard. Great confusion now took place on board of the brig; the fore-topsails became useless, so that it was impossible to keep her out of the wind, especially as her jibstay was cut away. This brought the two nearly in collision: the next minute, they were yard arm and yard arm, and the two undaunted friends, viz. the boatswain and young seaman, had grappled and lashed the Cruiser to the forechains. It was the work of a moment, yet a more fearful and determined conflict for a short time was never seen. "Boarders away!" shouted the Commander of the Cruiser. Like so many wild demons, fifty of the most furious and undaunted men, the boatswain and young seaman being foremost, leaped into the channels and clambered up the sides of the enemy; but they were received with determined coolness, for the Englishman's boarding pikes made fearful work with the assailants. The English captain fought like a tiger. His bravery was but of little avail, for by this time, although the young seaman had received a sabre wound in the shoulder, yet he had gained the deck of the brig, and was rushing up sword in hand, followed by the fearless boatswain, two lieutenants, and a number of the crew. It was a moment of the wildest excitement: the Englishmen fought to desperation; the young seaman, like a furious lion roused at the sight of

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blood, rushed aft with daring impetuosity, at the head of the assailants, bearing down all opposition, until momentarily checked by seven of the brig's crew, with their brave captain. They had taken a position each side of the wheel, and appeared determined to sacrifice their lives rather than to see the British flag hauled down. A stout English sailor, with tremendous muscular powers, came into collision with the young seaman; such was the force and dexterity with which he handled the sabre, that he struck the pistol from the American's hand, but while he dealt the blow, he left his own breast uncovered. He saw his danger and started, but it was too late: the next moment he was at the young seaman's feet. For a few minutes a most sanguinary and bloody contest ensued. The boatswain, maddened at the sight of the wound received by his young friend, dashed upon the Britons. His first onset was with the captain, who weakened by the loss of blood, soon fell under his powerful arm. The assailed now gave way, being overpowered by numbers, and the young seaman, true to the object in view, since the commencement of the action, although he was faint from his wounds, staggered aft, and with his own arm hauled down the British flag; after which he sunk exhausted upon its folds.

The deadly battle was now over, the brig was captured, and the two vessels hauled off to repair damages. All the wounded were taken on board the Cruiser, where they received all the attention that circumstances could bestow. The noble British captain and the brave

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young American seaman were subjects of admiration to all on board. Their wounds being examined, were pronounced not mortal, but the loss of killed and wounded on both sides was fearful. The Cruiser, however, suffered more than the brig, no doubt because of the great number of the crew.

The next day the damages were all repaired. A prize-master and crew were put aboard of the brig, with orders to proceed with all possible despatch to any port in the United States she could best enter with safety. The brig mounted twelve nine pounders, with a complement of thirty-five men, bound to Pernambuco, with a full cargo of British merchandize.

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CHAPTER XI.

PORTUGUESE BRIG, AND PRISONERS RELEASED.

For several days after the events recorded in the preceding chapter, the Cruiser was shrouded in gloom. It was a melancholy sight to behold the last sad offices of respect which were shown to those who had fallen in battle. Every feeling, alike on both sides, was merged into those of humanity and sorrow. Americans and Englishmen shared the same common respect, when they were deposited in their ocean grave. The same feelings of sorrow were exhibited by each as they stood around the gang-way, looking upon their departed shipmates.

It was an hour of deeper sadness when all hands were called to witness the funeral ceremonies. There stood a group of old seamen, of both nations, promiscuously together, with hard features, bronzed cheeks, and frames that seemed to defy the hardships and perils of an ocean life, and who had never flinched in storm or battle; yet the falling tears chased each other, in rapid succession, down their weather-beaten faces, while they gave way to the deepest feelings of sympathetic woe. Another party, from whom might have been expected but few

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of the finer traits of humanity, had depicted on their countenances evident traces of sorrow and sadness. The more youthful seamen, although they had behaved gallantly during the action, now gave way to extravagant expressions of grief, especially as the bodies were launched into the deep. A heavy splashing sound was heard, and as the waves opened to receive the mortal remains they sank beneath the surface of the ocean, there to rest until the sea shall give up its dead.

The wounded shared alike the sympathies and attention of all hands; yet perhaps greater concern was manifested for the brave young American seaman; his wounds, though deep, were not mortal. Time, however, and great care, were necessary to reinstate him in a condition for active duty. This, together with his bold intrepidity, (for he was the first man on the enemy's deck, heading the boarders,) his activity and daring impetuosity, which bore down all opposition, his sanguinary and bloody conflict on the quarter-deck of the brig, when faint and nearly exhausted from the loss of blood, his high ambition and noble emulation in hauling down the British flag, gained not only the admiration of both officers and seamen, but also won for him an unfading laurel. The undaunted boatswain had fought side by side with his young friend. His powerful muscular arm not only dealt destruction to all within its reach, but also parried many a deadly blow, aimed at his young friend. It was not strange, therefore, that their former friendship should be greatly increased from the fact of their rendering service to each other in the

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heat of battle. It was even so, for no circumstance whatever could induce the boatswain, when off duty, to be absent from the berth of his young friend in the ward-room. He cheered many a lonely hour by his assiduous acts of kindness, and when associations would call up recollections of former days, and throw a shade of gloom over the pale features of the young man, then it was the boatswain would spin a yarn of combined fleets, forming a line, battles fought, or the indissoluble friendship of true seamen; and his manner of relation was always so ingenuous and exciting, that it invariably diverted the young seaman's thoughts. Often at the conclusion of these yarns, the young seaman would grasp the hand of the other, exclaiming, "You are my true messmate, my friend, my noble friend."

The Cruiser after the action, had steered away so as to get into the vicinity of the Madeira Islands, a famous cruising ground, although attended with some risk, because of the men-of-war, which of course would be hovering about there. No danger, however imminent, would deter the commander from carrying into execution any plans which he formed; he resolved to make the Islands, and take a peep into Madeira.

It was a bright and beautiful morning. The sun shone resplendently, the sea was smooth, and the north-eastern breeze blew moderately, of sufficient strength, however, to keep the sails asleep. It was one of those days in which the weather-beaten tar forgets the hardships and perils of an ocean life. His feelings generally

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are in consonance with the state of the weather. Thus it was on the present occasion, for the gloom had nearly worn off, and the wounded, with the exception of the young seaman, and the English captain, were convalescent; the sailors, therefore, were in high spirits, and partook largely of that consequent feeling induced by the serenity and beauty of the weather. Nor was this feeling absent from the quarter-deck; invited by the splendor of the morning, they all retreated from below, to enjoy the fresh air, and beauty of the present scene.

"What distance are we from Madeira?" inquired the Commander of the sailing-master.

This was a puzzler for the Down Easter, because he had not yet worked up the last twenty-four hours' log. However, he was always ready in any and every emergency, for when he could not give a positive answer, he invariably resorted to his favorite substitute, and therefore answered the Commander by saying:

"I guess we are about seventy-five miles off that island."

"We shall see the islands to-day if the breeze lasts," observed the Commander, "and it is likely, we may fall in with some neutral vessel, perhaps a Spanish or Portuguese trader. I am anxious that it should be so, for if we should fall in with the enemy, the prisoners will be a great incumbrance to us, and therefore we must liberate them as soon as possible."

"I am of the same opinion," answered the first lieutenant; "but is it your intention to look into the harbor of Madeira?"

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The answer was in the affirmative.

"If I may venture to suggest an opinion," observed the first lieutenant, "I should think the safer plan is to remain near the island until we overhaul some neutral trader, from whom we can ascertain how many vessels there are in port, the strength of the enemy, and when they sail; for you are aware, sir, that this is the season for outward-bound East Indiamen, and of course they will be strongly convoyed. If then, we get such information, let us keep to windward, with a good look-out, and when they leave port we can make a dash at them in the night."

The Commander was silent; but his opinion once formed, could not be shaken, unless there were powerful and urgent reasons.

The conversation now took an entirely different range.

"I believe," observed the first lieutenant, "that it will be some time before our young shipmate recovers so as to be able to perform active service. He was badly wounded, and I know not how he sustained himself after that first cut on his shoulder. It was his valor and noble spirit, sir. I saw him and his friend the boatswain, with the dexterity of eagles, in the midst of a galling fire, lash the two vessels together. I saw them when the boarders were checked abaft, mount the fore-chains; the young seaman being the first on the brig's deck, followed by the undaunted boatswain, stimulated our men, by their courage, fearlessly to imitate their example. I saw that gallant young man after he

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had received the wound on his shoulder, with the boatswain at his side. Like two furious lions they were in the midst of that sanguinary conflict. Yes, sir, they are brave fellows, and would do honor to the regular service."

"By our flag," said the Commander, excited with the narration, "that young man shall have a berth in the ward-room."

"Sir," replied the first lieutenant, "he will not accept the promotion; for the perils they mutually shared in this action, but especially the powerful arm of the boatswain having warded off the deadly blow aimed at the life of his friend, has cemented their friendship, if possible, more strongly than ever."

The conversation was broken off by the cry of "Sail ho!" The stranger was reported to be a brig standing to the eastward, bearing four points on the weather bow. In a few minutes the Cruiser was under a cloud of sail in chase, and prepared for action. It was not more than half an hour before the colors of the stranger were distinctly ascertained to be Portuguese, for she had hove to. The English prisoners were ordered to get their dunnage ready, and in less than half an hour the Cruiser's boats were employed in transporting the Englishmen and their traps on board of the brig, which proved to be a Portuguese trader, from Madeira the previous day, bound to Lisbon. Information was received that there were several East Indiamen, outward bound, under convoy of a seventy-four and two frigates, and were to sail in two or three days. The prisoners

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being all deposited on board of the brig, the Cruiser bore away to make the island, which was judged to be fifty miles off. Some doubts were entertained as to the correctness of the information received from the Portuguese, especially as he was in no very good humor, not caring to have so many incumbrances as were put on board of his brig; the Commander therefore resolved to adhere to his first project, that of looking into the harbor.

Towards sunset the Island of Madeira was seen from the mast-head; the wind moderated, and at the commencement of the first night-watch it fell away to a dead calm. It was a magnificent night: the moon was high in the heavens, sailing in cloudless splendor, her silvery light tipping the tops of the billows, and stretching in a long line of effulgence across the waters; the waves pleasantly laved the sides of the Cruiser as she rolled gently in the moderate swell; the decks were noiseless, the quiet moon seemed as if by some magic spell she had hushed the deep into silence; for scarcely a sound rose up from the heaving waves, which, glittering now in the wake of the moon, and now sinking into sudden shadow, stretched away in the distance, until they faded into the dim hues of the distant sea-board. The whole scene was like a vision of romance, and yet to shipmen, a scene like this is more portentous than the wild wind's blast.

Towards the dawn of day, a gentle north-eastern breeze sprung up, and at broad daylight the Island was

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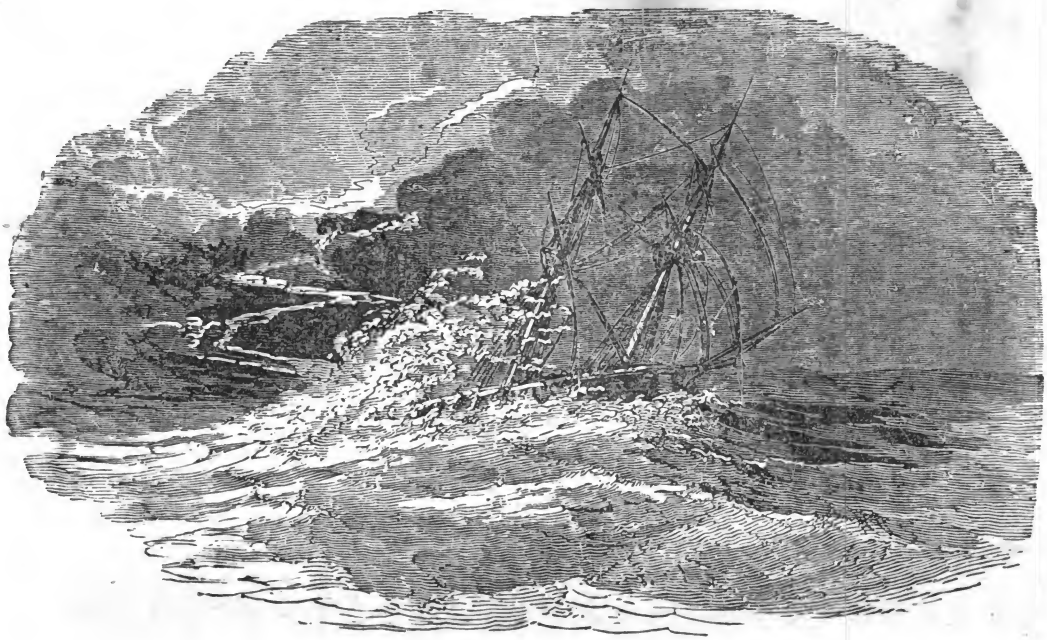

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twenty miles distant. Nothing was in sight, and the Cruiser stood boldly in for the land, until within ten miles of it, and then hove to, being to windward of the harbor. She was not long, however, destined to remain quiet, for while the crew were in the act of making a delicious breakfast, partly made up of some fruit which they had got from the Portuguese, several vessels were reported to be standing out of the harbor, and before a quarter of an hour had elapsed, a large ship was discovered bearing on the beam, close hauled on the starboard tack. The Cruiser being far to windward, made no other disposition than to get on the same tack. It was the general belief that the stranger to leeward was a frigate, one of the convoy sent to look after the Cruiser. All doubts on this head were dispelled in less than an hour, for the hull of the stranger was distinctly seen from the deck, and after close observation, was pronounced to be a frigate in chase, for she had already tacked. "It is time for us to show our heels," said the Commander. Every yard of canvass was spread to advantage by the wind; her trim was correctly ascertained, and now she waited the issue.

Again the exciting cry of "Sail ho!" was reported from aloft, bearing four points on the weather bow. All was now excitement, for should this vessel prove to be a man-of-war, the situation of the Cruiser would be extremely critical. In a very short time the alarming question was decided, for the stranger to windward was bearing down upon the Cruiser under a cloud of sail, and with such rapidity did they close together, that her

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character was soon made out to be a British sloop of war.

"Here, then, we are between two fires," said the Commander, "and one of them we must take, or I am very much mistaken. On what tack is the stranger to leeward?"

The reply was, "On the starboard tack."

The Cruiser was now kept away four points, and as the wind had freshened she flew over the blue billows at the rate of ten knots per hour; and the stranger to windward made no secret of his character or intentions, for he displayed an English flag and sent an eighteen pound shot, by way of a token of further civilities.

It now became evident, that the situation of the Cruiser was exceedingly dangerous. The frigate to leeward was closing in with her, and it was impossible to escape the fire of the sloop of war; but they rather chose to risk that fire in preference to running down to leeward of the frigate.

"We shall pay some respects to the one to windward, so get Long Tom ready," said the Commander.

The gunner was not a little gratified at this order, and he therefore charged his favorite with the utmost exactness. The most intense anxiety now prevailed. All eyes were fixed to windward, nor did they heed the leeward chase, until the quarter-master reported her to be only two points on the lee quarter. The chase now became intensely exciting. The two vessels were running abeam of each other, scarcely more than half a gunshot distance. The Cruiser, however, had the ad

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vantage of sailing, over the windward chase; but the frigate appeared to gain rapidly. The sloop of war perceiving the superior sailing of the Cruiser, opened a brisk fire, and the frigate being about gunshot off, sent a messenger also. Just at this moment another sail was reported from the mast-head two points on the lee bow; and at the same time a shot from the windward chase cut away the lower studding-sail boom. In a few minutes another boom was rigged out, and the sail set, amid a shower of balls which fell around the Cruiser.

"Our chance of escape depends entirely upon crippling the windward chase," said the Commander.

Long Tom was again put into requisition; the gunner elevated it with great precision. The order was given to fire. The messenger was sent in a broad sheet of flame, and when the smoke cleared away, there was the sloop of war's fore-topmast hanging over her side, and almost at the same moment a shot from her passed through the Cruiser's foresail. Three cheers were given, and the Yankee stripes floated high in the breeze of heaven.

But the play was not yet over, for the frigate held good way, and the sail to leeward was standing across the Cruiser's bow, but the sloop of war dropped astern, and in less than twenty minutes, the Cruiser hauled close by the wind, and in four hours, by making short boards, she left her unwelcome companions far to leeward.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE YOUNG SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

A SAILOR'S life is exciting, and one of continued privation and exposure. It is seldom that he has a bright sky, fair winds, and smooth sea. Short and interrupted are his enjoyments of social life, the greater part of his time being spent on the mountain-waves; consequently he contracts habits, entirely different from those of landsmen. His privations and frequent wants of that sustenance which is necessary to support animal life, gives him a heart to feel for the distress of others; he is therefore proverbially generous, scattering his money like dust, and his hand is ever open to relieve the wants and distress of the needy. His constant exposure makes him a stranger to fears, and he will hazard danger that would make a landsman quail. The ocean being his home, and seamen his companions, he is apt to think that all men are like himself; consequently he is unacquainted with the trickery and ways of the world, over whose surface he is constantly floating, and therefore he becomes an easy dupe to every designing knave on shore.

If a sea life is exciting on board of a merchant vessel,

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it is infinitely more so on board of an armed vessel or cruiser, especially in time of war, for besides the usual necessary duty, there is constant anxiety kept up. In the first place, the great consumption of provisions and water makes it necessary to touch at some neutral port to replenish; this is attended with danger. Again, chasing and being chased, battles, captures, risk of imprisonment, all these, together with the casualties of the ocean, keep the mind in the highest state of excitement. Thus it was on board of the Cruiser. Scarcely had the wounds healed which were received in the action with the brig, than the close chase and narrow escape immediately followed. Here, then, was matter of conversation, which was improved to the greatest advantage, and which served to keep alive the excitement that prevailed fore and aft.

"That was a neat chase and conducted in a seaman-like manner," observed the boatswain to the young seaman, for the latter had so far recovered from the effects of his wounds that he was able to go on deck, but not yet sufficiently strong for duty. "I think," continued the boatswain, "this craft, with a fair chance, and well handled, is a match for any thing that floats, especially by the wind; but thanks to Long Tom and the gunner's eye for our escape. It was a hot chase, and that sloop of war threw her shot well, but Long Tom did her business, for I'll miss my reck'ning if the fore-top-mast had not gone over the side, why then she would have crippled us, or we must have taken the frigate's fire, or have run close aboard of the sloop of war to leeward;

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so d'ye see, messmate, we kind of run the gauntlet, and a pretty hard chase we had on't, but Long Tom got us out of the scrape."

"I should like to have witnessed it," replied the young seaman, "and I shall hail with pleasure the time when I leave this ward-room for active service, for idleness hangs heavy on my mind. During such hours, associations will intrude upon the thoughts and induce a kind of melancholy, which I find impossible to shake off."

"Well, well," interrupted the boatswain hastily, "let's get on another tack, and as we have fine weather and moonlight nights, why then just spin out some of your yarn, for I think when you ball it all off, your mind will become easier."

The last dog-watch being over, one half of the crew, according to custom, were quietly stowed away in their hammocks, while the others were on the main-deck and forecastle, spinning out ghostly yarns, and singing their favorite piratical ballads, to the no small amusement and gratification of the remainder of the watch. The boatswain and the young seaman being seated on the booms near the gangway, the latter, according to promise, resumed his narrative as follows:

"I sought every opportunity to be in the society of her whom I now felt necessary to my very existence, and I had the unspeakable delight to see that my visits were not only acceptable, but they appeared to produce a reciprocal feeling of pleasure on her part. My parents were delighted, for they saw with evident

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pleasure that my passion for E—— drew me off from those haunts of dissipation, in which I had so often disgraced myself, and they believed that a union with E—— would not only be greatly desirable, but also prove the means of my reformation.

"Among the visitors at my father's house there was one, whose entire exterior was that of a man of fashion. With a handsome person, he combined an easy and elegant address, and yet he was one of those undefinable characters, of which, although he moved in high style, no certain clue could be obtained in regard to any definite means he possessed to keep up these appearances. I had met him frequently, and I blush when I tell you it was in a gambling resort, for in addition to my other excesses, I had contracted a passion for gaming. At first his manners pleased me, but upon further acquaintance I perceived that although he assumed the air of a novice, yet he was an adept gamester. Frequently he would lose small sums, but this was only a feint to make sure work of his intended victim, and will you believe it, although from my heart I despised him, yet often I was one of the party with him at the gaming table. On one occasion I called on Miss E——, and was astonished and surprised to find her in the society of Hastings, (for this was the name of the gamester,) enjoying a *tete a tete* conversation. She received me, I thought, with a degree of formality quite unusual, and our conversation was marked with cold indifference.

"In a short time I took my leave, and as I walked

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toward the door, I cast a glance on the man whom I despised, and I saw in that face, as he directed it toward me, a look of ineffable triumph and disdain. I rushed out of the house, my head and heart burning with jealousy and revenge, and plunged into deeper excesses of riot and dissipation. My wild extravagances could no longer be concealed, and they became the subject of public notoriety. At the gaming table I met with frequent losses; I sought every opportunity to meet my hated rival, that I might wreak my revenge upon him. My insatiable thirst for play soon presented the desired interview, and at the gaming table we met; for a short time fortune favored me, and I won to a considerable amount. Flushed with victory, and believing that I should now retrieve my former losses, the bets were increased and doubled. My triumph was short; fortune changed, and I lost not only a heavy sum of money, but my temper, which gave the despised villain with whom I gamed a decided advantage, for no circumstance could disturb the imperturbable coolness of the gamester. The enormous sums which I lost became fearful, and remorse, like an electric shock, suddenly seized upon my whole frame, and this remorse soon changed to madness and revenge, for I was now conscious that I had been cheated, and was the dupe of this miscreant wretch. I drew upon my honored father, and with a trembling hand gave the draft to my detested rival; he recevied it with an air of exultation, and then cast upon me a look of the proudest scorn.

"This was more than I could bear. Seizing him by

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the throat, Villain! I cried, and with one blow laid him senseless at my feet. How I reached my lodgings I know not, for I had connected to the black catalogue of my baseness, that of being a stranger to my father's house.

"The next morning I fully expected to have received a message from the gamester, but two days passed, and I neither saw nor heard from him. At the expiration of the second day, I received a letter from my honored parent. Oh, my God! the thought of that letter, even at this distant period, distracts my brain. There was no harshness, no upbraiding, no word that could be construed into a censure; but this only wounded me yet deeper, and my black ingratitude stung me to the heart. The letter was short, advising me that my draft was duly honored, but that he would be unable, from his peculiar embarrassments, to do more; in other words, he was a ruined man, and I, villain that I was, had by my prodigalities helped to do the foul deed. This thought filled my soul with horror. My brain turned, and my phrenzied imagination conjured up a thousand frightful visions. At one time I beheld my father weltering in his blood, from a wound inflicted by my own hands. Again I saw my dear parent penniless and starving; while I conceived that I was despised by E——, an outcast from society, and an alien from my father's house. These and many more, wrought me up to the highest pitch of wild excitement. My ravings brought on a high fever, reason forsook her throne, and when morning broke forth, it found me in a high state of delirium.

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"How long I remained in this situation I did not ascertain, until after my recovery. When consciousness returned, I found myself in a bed enclosed with curtains, and in the same room which I had formerly occupied in my father's house. My mother sat at the bedside, watching me with affection's tenderest solicitude; and when she saw that reason had returned, her heart was too much affected for utterance, and she burst into a flood of tears. My revered father was there also, and they broke forth simultaneously with, 'My son, my dear son, we will live happy together;' and then they maintained the deepest silence, making signs to me to preserve the same precaution. I lingered for some time, but by my youth and a sound constitution, the unremitted and attentive nursing of my mother, together with the best medical skill, in the course of three weeks I became convalescent, and able to walk out. During this period not a word escaped from the lips of my father, in relation to the bad consequences my conduct had produced.

"I resolved from this time, that I would devote my whole life and energies to the support and comfort of my parents, so that by any means I might smooth their path in life, and cause their grey hairs to go down in peace to the grave. Accordingly I went forthwith to settle my father's business, and found it even worse than I had anticipated, for he had sold all his bank stock, and heavy mortgages were given upon all his estate. When the entire settlement was made, and all arranged, I found there was scarcely any thing

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left, except the old family mansion. 'Here then,' I exclaimed, 'my follies and wild extravagances have brought on this desolation.' Although my cure, and return to the confidence and affection of my parents had been purchased at a dear rate; yet it was a consolation to my mind, to behold them, notwithstanding their fortune was gone, yet apparently happy."

Here the narrative was interrupted, as the order was given to take in sail, for the ominous appearance of the weather indicated that the next twenty-four hours would not pass over quietly.

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CHAPTER XIII.

A GALE OF WIND.

A GALE of wind is preferable at any time, at sea, in a strong vessel that is well founded, to a long duration of calms. Those who have never experienced a calm at sea cannot form an adequate idea of the dull monotony, listlessness, and sometimes horror that is felt on shipboard, especially if within the tropics; for in these latitudes they are apt to continue much longer; consequently they are often the cause of great distress and want. There are not a few instances where vessels have been becalmed for thirty days together, and this too, under a burning sun, where the heat is intolerable and thirst insupportable. Often has the author been exposed to these dead calms; the sea is like molten brass; no breath of air is stirring; the atmosphere is dry, the mouth is parched, and the heavens hang over all a canopy of lurid fire, in the very centre of which burns with intense fierceness the meridian sun. The decks, the cabin, and the tops, are alike stifling; the awnings may indeed afford a partial shelter from the vertical rays of the sun, but no breeze can be wooed down the eager mainsail, and wherever a stray beam

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steals to the deck through an opening in the canvass, the turpentine oozes out, and boils in the heat, and the planks become as intolerable to the tread as if a furnace was beneath them.

It was one of those days as above described, except that the heat was not so intense, for the latitude was 33 degrees north, that the Cruiser lay becalmed; many of the officers had made their escape from the dense heat of the ward-room and the cabin, and had taken shelter under the awnings, to enjoy, if possible, from the open air, a freer respiration. In vain did they stretch their utmost gaze to catch sight of a ripple or cat's paw dancing over the deep; in vain did they look for some cloudy token from the azure vault that might indicate relief from the dull monotony; none was there. All over the wide expanse the slumbering ocean presented a surface like a polished mirror, except that its glassy bosom was occasionally disturbed by some porpoises which swam lazily, ever and anon showing their dark figures above the surface, while the transparent waters gave additional beauty to the changing colors of the sporting dolphin. The keen-eyed sea-gull too, soared along in lofty flight with heavy wings, while Mother Carey's chickens, with twittering voice and elastic tread upon the liquid element, as secure as though walking on a solid base, had gathered round the vessel, and produced no little speculation and prophesying among the crew, for it will be understood that the gathering numbers of these birds is a certain harbinger of a coming tempest with sailors. Until near the close of the day,

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it was exceedingly hot and sultry, but as sunset drew on, some clouds arose in the west, and a light breeze springing up, diffused a delicious coolness throughout the vessel, imparting new vigor to the panting and almost exhausted men.

Invigorated by the welcome air, a group of officers gathered on the weather quarter to behold the sun go down; and those who have never seen such a spectacle at sea can have no conception of the vastness of the idea with which it fills the mind. Slowly the broad disc wheeled down toward the west, seeming to dilate as it approached the horizon, and as its lower edge touched the distant seaboard, trailing a long line of golden light across the undulating surface of the deep, the scene was magnificent. Pile on pile of clouds assuming every fantastic shape, and varying from red to purple, and from purple to gold, lay heaped around the setting god. For a few moments the billows could be seen rising and falling against the broad disc of the descending luminary, while with a slow and scarcely perceptible motion, he gradually slid beneath the horizon. Insensibly the brilliant hues of the clouds died away, changing from gorgeous crimson through almost every gradation of color, until at length a faint apple-green invested the whole western sky, slowly fading into a deep azure, as it approached the zenith.

"That is a magnificent sight!" exclaimed the young seaman to his messmate, as they stood gazing on the scene, "and well calculated to inspire the mind with expansive views of the power and sublimity

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of the Creator." The sun had now been hid for some minutes, and the apple-green of the sky was rapidly becoming darker and more and more indistinct, though the edge of a solitary dark cloud, hanging a few degrees above the horizon, was yet tipped with a faint crimson. Meantime the stars began to appear in the opposite firmament one after another, twinkling into sight as if by magic, until the whole eastern heaven was gemmed with them. No sight that meets the eye so strongly imparts the idea of immensity, and at the same time impresses one with the solitude and loneliness of his situation on shipboard, as when looking around the horizon, and at the vast concave above; and when over all the mighty space of ocean included within its circuit, the eye rests on not a solitary sail, a sensation of loneliness is experienced which no pen can describe.

The breeze again died away, leaving the sails flapping to and fro as the Cruiser rocked on the swell. It was now a dead calm; no perceptible agitation could be discovered on the surface of the deep, except the long undulating swell, which never subsides, and which can be compared to nothing but the heavy breathing of some gigantic monster when lulled to repose. In less than half an hour the ocean became sensibly agitated by the coming breeze, and the firmament which a short time before had been spangled with myriads of twinkling stars and planets, was now shrouded in gloom, while a black mass of opaque clouds hove up their enormous heads; pile after pile, as if impelled by a thousand furies, rose, breaking into wild scuds, and

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dashed away with the rapidity of lightning to the eastern board. From the suddenness with which the black mass of clouds had risen, they had not as yet overspread the heavens with their sable curtains, and here and there, as if to relieve the eye as well as the mind, a tiny azure spot appeared, exhibiting a brilliant gem strongly contrasting with the heavy, sombre clouds that rolled along their dark masses; intercepting from the vision, all that could indicate to the practised eye of a seaman, relief from the approaching storm. On came the driving black clouds that seemed surcharged with vapor, and as they reached the zenith, discharged their contents in torrents of rain, which fell like a mighty cataract, threatening to overwhelm the Cruiser in the awful deluge; while peal after peal of roaring thunders shook the craft from the kelson to the truck, and incessant flashes of lightning played round the masts and rigging.

"Take in sail!" shouted the skipper. It was high time, for a huge pile of dark waters was driving towards the Cruiser, impelled by a furious blast of wind; but such was now the discipline of the crew, that the work of a few minutes not only reduced the little craft to bare poles, but her fore-topsail and top-gallant-yard were also lashed snugly on deck, the fore-yard lowered down and secured, and her topmasts were housed, while she was driven along before the violent gale, at the rate of eleven knots. The sea now hove up in enormous piles, and as the dark billows rose in spectral lights, they wore an aspect so ghastly, as caused the stoutest hearts

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to quail. The night was fearful, and the clouds seemed as if bolted together, while the heavens were hung in sackcloth, except now and then from the vivid flashes of lightning, the whole canopy presented a livid sheet of flame, and the terrific gale howled a death song, as if proclaiming the funeral dirge of the frail bark, which now appeared not larger than a nut-shell, driving madly before the wild wind's blast.

"I like not the moanings of the wind, its sounds are ominous," said the skipper to the officers of the watch who had now gathered around him. "And even," he continued, "should we escape being struck by this terrible lightning, what can wood and iron, managed with the best skill, do with this increasing gale. Steady, port!"

"Port," responded the helmsman.

Just then the little craft rose on the top of a tremendous sea. Fortunately she answered her helm quickly, and took the huge monster directly aft, but its fearful, craggy top broke, dashing volumes of water on the Cruiser's deck. For a moment she lay entirely still, pressed by the immense body of water on deck, but as the ports were all triced up, she quickly shook off this burden.

"She must be relieved from all the weight that is on deck; these guns must be launched overboard," said the Commander.

"It is a dangerous service, sir, yet it must be executed," replied the first lieutenant.

The boatswain and gunner were appointed, with the

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most experienced seamen, to the performance of this duty; and although it was attended with much hazard to the life and limb of those who were engaged in it, as well as injury to the craft, yet the superior skill and judgment of the boatswain and gunner managed to launch overboard ten of the carronades, with all the lumber, spare spars, &c., without accident or injury. This last duty was effected no sooner than was absolutely necessary, for scudding now became exceedingly dangerous, and the Cruiser was nearly unmanageable; for although she bounded over the waves like a race-horse, yet the sea was so high, that it would occasionally lift her stern quite out of water, losing the action of the helm. In this position she brought the wind two or three points on either quarter, to the imminent danger of broaching to, which would inevitably have sealed the doom of the crew and vessel. At midnight the heavy black clouds lifted up in the western board, presenting from the horizon a long line of azure, the dark masses rolled away to the eastward, the force of the terrific gale broke, and at daylight the Cruiser was scudding away to the northeast, with a brisk gale and following sea.

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CHAPTER XIV.

SATURDAY NIGHT, ETC

SEVERAL days, after the events described in the preceding chapter, brought the Cruiser to the vicinity of the Western Islands. She had been out forty days on the cruise, and as yet but one solitary prize had been taken. There was another consideration of a more serious character, viz. the water was getting short, and it became absolutely necessary to replenish it. To effect this, she must touch at one or other of the islands, or run the risk of getting a supply from some vessel. The latter method would be exceedingly doubtful, and the former was hazardous. It was resolved, however, to touch at one of the islands, if possible. Although there had been no want of excitement on board of the Cruiser, yet it was not of that character which produced exemption from dull monotony, or that inspired any expectation of a very brilliant cruise.

Nor were these feelings confined exclusively to the main-deck and forecastle; the quarter-deck partook largely of that listlessness induced by long inactivity from actual service, or what might be more properly said, actual fighting, or actual captures. It would have

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been a curious spectacle to a landsman, if he had dropped on board of the Cruiser at this period. In the ward-room, (with but one or two exceptions,) they resorted to every means which in their judgments could procure enjoyment, or have a tendency to pass away the time. Nevertheless, time hung heavily on their hands, for an observer might have easily detected their predominant characteristics to be impatient dissatisfaction and discontent, especially at their meals; for they were now reduced to the common fare of ship-board, the fresh stock and nick-nacks being exhausted. There were, however, two leading characters among them, and their peculiar tact adroitly managed to secure the confidence of the others, as well as to keep down the apparent outbreakings, which were not unfrequent in the ward-room.

"In my opinion, gentlemen," said the lieutenant of marines, "if the old adage be true, we shall yet have a profitable cruise. It is true that our prize-money, thus far, will not make us rich; but then we have tested the good qualities of this craft, and I believe the chances are very much in our favor to make a fortune."

At the sound of the last word, the dormant feelings of the Down Easter were roused, and he quaintly replied, that "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." "I guess," he continued, "it will turn out the same as a voyage I once made from Kennebunk to Martinique. My own venter consisted of potatoes and onions, and other notions; just such things suited the market, for I spoke a vessel right out from the island

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that give me the news. Well, I was running down my nestings in high spirits, and thinks I to myself I have just hit it this time, any how; and so I calculated to make fifty per cent. on the outward venter, and twenty-five per cent. on the molasses in Kennebunk, so with that sum and what I had before, I guessed I could buy a quarter of the Charming Nancy, and thus become a ship-owner. Just as I was calculating all about this matter," he continued, "one of my men sung out, 'Sail ho!' Well, the blamed craft, for all that I could do to keep out of her way, came up hand over hand, and what should she be but a French privateer, so the officer came on board and cut as many salaams as a coast of Guinea monkey, and after prating gibberish for half an hour, the French varmint took all my potatoes, onions, cheese, and apples, and left me as dry as a powder horn. So after he had told me a fine story about the good friendship of the two countries, he commenced bowing and cutting his shines with his arms, and grinning until he reached the gangway. After he had got into his boat, he looked up into my face actually laughing, and said, '*Jolie brig, jolie brig, capitaine, bon viage, bon viage! ha tresbien. Adieu! mon capitaine.*' So saying, away they pulled, and the half starved frog-eaters set up a roar of laughter until they reached their craft, and when they got on board, they immediately made sail and went off. And so I got paid for my venter in bows, and scrapes, and grins; and I say it is not best to count the chickens before they're hatched.'

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At the conclusion of the sailing-master's story, the officers were convulsed in a roar of laughter.

"Yes, yes," said one of the prize-masters, "I recollect, Frank, when you came home from that voyage, what a deep impression that Frenchman made upon your mind, as well as upon your venter; for you not only took it very hard, but in consequence I think you also took the benefit of the act, made and provided, &c."

The Down Easter did not relish this last communication, but rallying, he once more brought his favorite substitute to bear upon them, and tactly replied:

"I guess you would n't have done better, if you 'd stood in my shoes."

A sailor is literally jack of all trades, for his peculiar situation, in reference to an ocean life, verifies the adage, that "necessity is the mother of invention," and the berth-deck at this time presented an exhibition of the assertion just made. There one might have seen the mechanic arts in practical operation, and although this matter was not reduced to as much system as on board a merchant vessel, yet tailors, shoemakers, and hatters, with others, were all busily employed at their several avocations. It is true there were many that no consideration would induce to work, and these might easily have been selected from the others, for their whole appearance indicated, that idleness and vice were the predominant traits of their characters. Gambling, therefore, was their ruling passion, and occupied all their leisure hours, and they carried this ruling passion to such an excess, that some of them were not only dis-

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possessed of their prize tickets, but they actually lost every article of their clothing; in consequence of which, thefts were being committed and carried on to such an extent, that the more orderly part of the crew resolved to put an end to this abominable practice, and banish it entirely from the Cruiser. This good resolution, with the aid of the officers, was carried into execution, and in a few days its good effects were abundantly manifested in the berth-deck.

In all the circumstances and instances of a sea life, perhaps there are none that tends so greatly to harmonize and unite the good feelings of seamen as the old custom of drinking Saturday night, as it is termed by seamen. On these occasions all their differences and animosity are merged into the all-absorbing custom; the hardships and perils of an ocean life are forgotten, and the delightful recollections and associations, inspired by the land of their birth and their homes, are called up and discussed; but that which mostly delights a sailor, is to descant upon the beauty and merit of his fair one, whether she be a wife or sweetheart, and there is no class of men that more truly love and respect a virtuous female than seamen. Thus then the highest state of enjoyment at sea is when the flowing can is pushed about, and the old rapturous toast of "Sweethearts and wives," is being drunk.

This day being Saturday, and now drawing to a close, preparations were made for a regular set-to on the berth-deck; accordingly the hammocks were triced up, so as to afford as much room as possible.

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The first dog-watch being out, supper finished, and the wreck cleared away, the customary Saturday night's allowance was served out and brought forward, to the no small gratification of all hands, who expected at least two hours of unalloyed enjoyment, each mess having sided off, to have that enjoyment in their own peculiar way.

"Come, messmates," said an old salt, after he had poured out his allowance in a tumbler made of bullock's horn, "here she goes to wives and sweethearts!"

This was echoed by all the mess, after which the sentiment was general throughout the berth-deck; a few, however, bawling out in return,

"Here she goes," said one, "to my box of diamonds!"

"Here she goes," cried another, "to my tight little cutter Nancy!"

"Here she goes," bawled out a third, with stentorian lungs, "to Poll and the babies!"

This last sentimental effusion created a general laugh at the expense of the old sailor, who received it all in good part, and after hemming several times to clear his throat, he opened the "door of this office of deposite," this being the appellation given to his mouth, and struck up the famous ballad of Lord North and the Revolution. Perhaps it may be unknown to the reader that this ballad contains thirty-six verses. When the vocalist had got half way through, a hoarse voice cried out from another mess, "Avast there, Tom, just take a round turn with that, and let's hear this yarn." Tom clapped

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a stopper on his ditty, and hauled alongside the other mess to listen. A phrenologist would have immediately pronounced the narrator of the following yarn to be strongly marked with credulity. The old salt had spent nearly all his life on the ocean; he had served many years on board of a man-of-war, consequently he had imbibed all those superstitious notions so common among sailors. He knew no fear, except it was by ghosts or apparitions, and of these unearthly figures and sights he had an abundant stock of yarns laid up; so after shifting his morsel of Virginia, and disposing of a liberal quantity of the juice, he began his ghostly tale as follows:

"I once shipped on board of an English East Indiaman, to go on a bit of a cruise to Canton. Well, there was eight ships in the fleet, convoyed by two seventy-fours, which had about four hundred raw recruits on board, going out to fill up the ranks in the army, and after that to make grub for the long land-crabs and alligators. So after we had been out a week, we got separated from the fleet by a gale of wind. 'Well, this is unlucky, but what's the odds,' said the skipper; 'we shall fall in together at Madeira.' So one night it was blowing stiff, and a heavy lump of sea on, in the middle of the watch; lay aloft to double reef the topsails; just as we got the reef points tied, the officer of the watch bawled out like thunder to the helmsman, 'hard a-port! lay down off the yard for your lives,—cherrily men.' I just got on deck in about a pig's whisper, and the officer looking just as pale as a ghost himself, and the skipper screaming as if he was getting murdered in

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his state-room; why, my own pins began to shake, especially when the officer of the deck said to me, 'Do you see that craft right ahead?' I just took a squint forward, and sure enough, there she was, close under our bows, standing right athwart the hawse; 'Luff!' said the officer to the helmsman; our ship came up to the wind, but there was the stranger in the same position. 'Keep her away!' bawled out the officer; again our craft fell off four points, but 'twas no use; there lay the craft just the same way, and she did'nt seem to move; so we kept backing and filling in this way, sometimes hailing the stranger, but we could'nt get out of her way, nor get a word out of her; and what made all hands think there was foul play, our skipper was all this time just for all the world like a crazy man, screaming and kicking up such a noise, just as if some one was going to cut his throat. Well, you may be sure we did'nt much like it, for some how or other, we could'nt get it out of our noddles that no good would come out of this; so there was six of us just agreed on the spot to tip the double, and give leg bail for security after we got into Madeira, but just as we were making up this, the day broke, and in less time than you can say Jack Robinson, the stranger was out of sight, and although all hands were looking at her, yet none of us could tell whether she sunk or went up in the air, and just as soon as the ship was out of sight, our skipper stopped his pipes, and all was quiet again. Well, the next day, in the forenoon watch, our skipper and all the officers were on the quarter-deck; so, d'ye see, it was my trick at the helm.

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and I heard the officers chatting in low voices about the stranger ship, and the noises in the state-room; but the skipper did'nt say a word. He did'nt seem to be very easy in his mind, and looked for all the world as if he was frightened by a spirit. Well, we had good weather and a short run over to Madeira, and all the fleet got in the same day, but we could not get any chance to slip off, and in two days the whole fleet went to sea again. Well, we had a good chance across the trade winds, and so we clapped our heads together to find out something about that strange ship and the skipper. It was not long before we found out the secret, for the Captain's steward was a pretty knowing chap, and somehow or other, he got the whole story, and when I heard it, thinks I to myself, this ship is too small to carry me back to England."

"Here Tom," cried out a half dozen voices, "wet your whistle, and give us the balance of that yarn." Tom, not at all displeased, tossed off a glass of grog with a relish peculiar to sailors, and after replacing his morsel of Virginia, he continued his yarn as follows:

"Well then, the last voyage our skipper made, was to the East Indies, and as the saying goes, he was a hard horse, and made every man toe the mark. Well, the first officer was a chap that could do his duty, but he did'nt like this knocking down and dragging out, and kicking up shindies with the men; so he made bold one day, to tell the skipper on't. Now the skipper did'nt relish it much, so after this they had many high words and quarrels, until one morning watch, the mate

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was found dead in his berth, and the news went fore and aft that he died in a fit. Some of our chaps hoisted it all in, but the others could not swallow it, for they said he was a hearty fellow, and not given to such kind of mishaps. Well, a rumor soon got out that he was poisoned, as our skipper looked very queer and melancholy, and used to jump out of his berth, screaming for help; knotting these altogether, they made up their minds that the skipper gave him a dose that sent him to "kingdom come," and they did 'nt have any doubt about it, for the ship never had any luck afterwards; what with carrying away topmasts, losing men overboard, splitting sails, until at last she foundered in the Bay of Bengal."

Up to this period they listened in breathless silence, but now one of them inquired about the strange ship.

"Aye, aye," said Tom, "I'd like to forgot that. Well, the steward said that night he heard the skipper say in his ravings, 'I'll never look on that ship; she is always in my way, always athwart my hawse.'" Here the narrator paused, but the astonished listeners, eager to know the fate of the ship that Tom was in, pressed him to go on.

"Well then," said Tom, "to make a long story short, we got into the China Sea, and for a few days we had 'nt as much wind as would fill an old woman's night cap, but one night it came on, and took us napping; it was what they call a taffoon, and before we could get the sail in, the topsails blew away. The wild hurricane increased, and at midnight that awful ship

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was again athwart our hawse, upright as a dish, our skipper roared, and down went our ship nearly on her beam ends; all three sticks were cut away, and she righted up. At day break the gale moderated, and our solemn visitor vanished away; two of the ships towed us into Canton, and you may be sure, messmates, I made a slip-bend there."

When Tom concluded his ghostly yarn, they called on Jimmy Ducks for a song, so the little musician com plied with the request by singing, "Dear Tom, this ere grog," &c. Just as he concluded his ditty, the hoarse voice of the boatswain's mate bawled out, "Larbowlines ahoy!" and the Saturday night's glee was at once ended.

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CHAPTER XV.

SWEDISH BRIG, CAPTURE OF A BRITISH SCHOONER AND BRIG

GREAT anxiety now prevailed on board of the Cruiser in reference to the low state of the water, for even should she succeed to enter the harbor of either of the Islands without molestation, she must then run the hazard of being blockaded, and probably ruin the cruise. After much consultation, she was kept away for the Island of Terceira, one of the Azores; this Island not being of so much importance, either as to size or commerce, as the Island of Fayal, it was not very likely that she would fall in with the enemy.

The Island appeared at 10, A. M., and at the same time a brig was seen standing to the westward. All sail was made in chase, and as the stranger did not appear to be in a hurry, in a short time the Cruiser came up with her, and she proved to be a Swedish vessel from England via Fayal, bound to St. Thomas. Information was received from the captain that two British frigates were on this station, and that they were now at anchor in the harbor of Fayal, but, no doubt, they would be out shortly. Here, then, was another obstacle in the way to entering the port of Terceira. Now as she was a

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neutral vessel, and a neutral port was under her lee, where she might obtain water without any risk, and as necessity very often knows no law, it was determined to give the Swedish captain a reasonable compensation for his detention and water, and if he refused, to take it by force. Fortunately he was very friendly, and cheerfully complied with the request by delivering fourteen puncheons of water, for which he was liberally paid in a draft on the United States. This was a most happy relief to the Cruiser, for although the quantity was comparatively small, yet even this was sufficient to extend the cruise.

Shortly after parting company with the brig, another sail was descried, standing to the eastward. All was now excitement, in view of the information just received of the two British frigates. However, the stranger in question appeared to be too small for a man-of-war, and after a chase of two hours she was overhauled, and proved to be a British schooner in ballast, from Terceira, bound to England. This vessel was not actually worth manning, and as self-preservation is the first law of nature, so in this case it was resolved to take out the provisions and water, with the prisoners, and then scuttle the schooner, so as to prevent information being given to the enemy of the proximity of the Cruiser.

This was indeed a hard case, as the captain was part owner of the schooner, and in losing her he lost his all. He plead manfully for a release, and under other circumstances this request would have been granted; but the critical position of the Crusier, at this time, made-

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it highly necessary to take every precaution for her safety and success. The Commander was inexorable, so the fate of the schooner was sealed, and after taking all her moveable spars, sails and rigging, she was scuttled and sunk.

Important information was received from the captain, viz. that the combined fleet of merchantmen, for Lisbon and the Mediterranean, were at rendezvous in Cork, waiting convoy, and probably would be ready to sail about this time. This was cheering news to all hands, and the Cruiser was now under a cloud of sail, steering away for the Capes of Lisbon, as they fully expected to fall in with the fleet, and in that event, capture as many as could be manned, and thus terminate the cruise.

The young seaman had now entirely recovered from his wounds, and was on duty. No argument or solicitation could induce him to accept promotion, for he greatly preferred the society of his friend, the boatswain; and although it might be considered a lack of ambition, yet the course he pursued commanded respect fore and aft, for he was kind and obliging to those who occupied the same station with himself; always the first at duty, yet he never mingled so far with the sailors as to enter into their follies and dissipations. To the officers he was obedient without servility; although his education was superior to any of the quarter-deck officers, yet in the boatswain he had found a true and honest heart, one that was above guile, whose attachment and friendship were unwavering, and although his intelligence was far below that of the young seaman,

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yet his intrinsic worth made his society to the young seaman a source of greater happiness than that of any officer on board.

"I felt bad enough for the skipper of that schooner the other day," observed the boatswain; "why when the little craft went down, he looked for all the world as if he was putting his wife or child under hatches, and I'll tell you what, messmate, I don't mind a bit of a dust with Frenchmen, or Spaniards, or any of them outlandish chaps, but when it comes to fighting, sinking, and burning with them that talks the same lingo, why d'ye see, lad, I don't much like it; howsomever, we've had cause enough for this war."

"That is very true" replied the young seaman, "but this affair of sinking the schooner is one of the evils connected with war. It often happens that not only in war, but also in the operations of society, the innocent suffer for the guilty; yet the sinking of that schooner was a matter of necessity for self-preservation; nevertheless, I would gladly give up one half of my prize-money, if it would compensate the captain for the loss of his property; and if I am not deceived," he continued, "our Commander and first lieutenant would have given the schooner up, had it not been for the information received from the Swedish brig; and now I sincerely hope we may speedily fall in with the British fleet of merchantmen and finish this cruise, for I assure you I am heartily tired of this mode of warfare."

"And no wonder," replied the boatswain, "for you've had pretty rough usage, lad, and hark 'ee, if

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you don't hold back a little in another such a brush as we had with that brig, why then you 'll lose the number of your mess, that's all, for I don't want to sew your hammock up, and launch you overboard this cruise. No, nô! don't go ahead of your messmates; let's fight side by side, and the blow that is aimed at your breast shall pass through this carcass of mine first, for we 've been true messmates together, and we 'll be so when we slip our moorings."

The young seaman grasped the hand of the boatswain, passionately exclaiming, "You are my supe rior every way; twice have you interposed your arm and saved my life; you have nursed me, bound up my wounds, soothed my sorrows, sympathized with my weakness, and now to fill the list of obligations, I have the assurance of your honest heart that you will sacrifice your life for one so undeserving as myself."

The conversation was now interrupted by the cry of "Sail ho!" which had just been discovered from the top-gallant yard. The stranger was at a great distance off, and as it was late in the afternoon, there was not the smallest probability either of overhauling her, or of ascertaining her character before dark; the object, however, was to get sufficiently near to keep her in sight with the eye-glass. Every yard of canvass was spread in chase, and every necessary precaution was made for action, but when night set in, it was just discoverable from the top-gallant yard, that the stranger was steering to the southward. After some consultation, it was concluded that the chances were so small of

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the sail being in sight the next morning, that it was scarcely worth while to run so great a distance (as they must necessarily have done if they continued the chase) from their intended cruising ground. This opinion was overruled by the Commander, and it was settled to keep on until midnight; then, if the stranger was not in sight with the night glass, to haul up by the wind. Nothing was seen of the chase, but at daylight either her or another sail was seen about two miles off. Not more than one hour transpired before Long Tom was in speaking distance, and his conversation was so effectual, and so much to the purpose that she hove to, and displayed a large British ensign, without showing any disposition for defence; she was boarded by two boats from the Cruiser, and proved to be a British brig from Dublin, bound up the Mediterranean with a rich and most valuable cargo. It was not surprising that she made no resistance, because she was not armed, as she intended to sail with the fleet under convoy, but as they had extended the time of sailing to a much greater length than was at first contemplated, the captain chose to run the hazard without convoy, but he paid dear for his temerity. Since leaving the United States, no favorable opportunity had occurred for the majority of the crew to give proof of their disposition to plunder. The action with the first brig was so obstinately contested, and there was so many killed and wounded, that their attention was drawn off, and probably gave place to a refinement unusual to them. In regard to the schooner, there was little upon which they

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could lay their hands, and their condition excited so much commiseration, that no attempt was made to execute their miserable propensity. But in the present instance, it required all the firmness and courage of the officers, as well as the better disposed part of the crew, to prevent a scene of robbery and plunder, which would have been disgraceful to the American flag, especially in the present case, where no resistance was made. The highest credit was due to the Commander and officers for the decided stand they took to put an effectual stop to these lawless outbreaks.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SQUALL, THE YOUNG SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED

A FEW days after the capture of the brig, the Cruiser was off the Capes of Lisbon, in the direct track of the outward-bound British fleet of merchantmen, and it was the sanguine expectation of both officers and crew, that if they should have the good fortune to fall in with this fleet, they would speedily finish the cruise. November had set in, with all that cheerless gloom, which is so frequent on the British coast, and which extends more or less along the southern coast of Europe to the south point of the Mediterranean; dense fogs, frequent rains, and dark, cloudy weather, a greater part of the time, made it impossible to see any distance off, and when blue sky appeared, it was a source of rejoicing to all hands. Ten days passed away, and nothing transpired to break the dull monotony which had gathered on the crew, and made them long for excitement to change the scene.

It was after a day of gloom, occasioned by a heavy fog and rain, that just at sunset the wind shifted, the fog dispersed, the rain ceased to fall, and after night the heavens were dressed with numerous glittering

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stars. The change of weather produced a consequent change of feeling, which burst forth in songs and merriment, while Jimmy's musical powers were again brought into requisition, and the merry dance continued until two bells, when the watch was ordered below. But they were not long destined to enjoy their silent repose: just as six bells struck, the shrill whistle and hoarse voice of the boatswain summoned all hands, "Take in sail, ahoy!" The watch came tumbling up, and there was yet a few twinkling stars to be seen in the zenith, although there was a heavy bank of mist close aboard on the weather bow, driving rapidly for the Cruiser, and covering sea and sky in that quarter with a shadowy veil. The men were already at their stations, and as they came up from below, each man sprung to aid his messmate, so that in less time than I have taken to describe it, the light sails were all taken in, and she was kept away a few points, so as to be ready to let every sail go by the run, if necessary, should the squall strike her; nor did she wait long for the unwelcome visitor, for scarcely had the Cruiser been made snug, before the squall burst on her, in a whirlwind of rain and wind, against the fury of which it was impossible to stand for a moment. As the squall struck, she keeled over, until the decks were fearfully inclined, while the tall masts bent like rushes in the tempest, the spars strained and cracked as if they were unequal to the torture. For a few moments the officers and crew stood aghast, and thought it was now all over, and some clutched ropes, so as to be prepared to lash themselves

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to her sides, should she capsize; but after a second of breathless uncertainty, she slightly recovered herself and dashed forward as if she had been an arrow shot from the bow; her whole forward part buried in the foam that boiled around her bows, and flew high up the mast in showers. All this time the wind was shrieking through the hamper with an intonation like that of a tortured fiend, so that it became next to impossible to get the foresail and mainsail reefed. At length, however, she was stripped to the fight, when she rose until nearly level, bearing gallantly up against the gale.

"Wheugh! what a flurry! Old Davy himself has laid hold of the bellows to-night," said the captain of the starboard watch, stooping before the gale, and turning his back to windward. "Why it blows as if it would whiff our little craft away before it. By the gods! but that bucket-full of rain that has just fell on my shoulders, was enough to have pinned any man to the decks."

"How long was the squall coming up?" said the Commander, as soon as the roar of the elements suffered him to speak, for it was only in the occasional pauses of the gale that he could be heard.

"It came up like a pet in a woman," said an old prize-master, who was in the watch on deck, "one moment her face is all smiles, the next black as a thunder-cloud. When five bells struck, the sky was as clear as a kitten's eye, and now you can't see a fathom over the starboard bow; while we are driving along here like a chip in a mill race, or a land bird caught by

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a northeaster. Whistle, whistle, howl, howl; why it blows as if Satan himself was working the bellows up to windward."

Heavy peals of thunder were succeeded by sharp flashes of lightning, and for a moment the gale lulled, but to increase in violence, shifting four points to the eastward, and spent its fury for an hour, during which time the Cruiser flew over the billows, with the rapidity of a northeast scud; after which, the clouds lifted to the eastward, the rain ceased, and the remainder of the night the weather was moderate and clear.

The following morning exhibited a very different scene from the preceding night, for it could scarcely be realized, when viewing the present bright and bland aspect of nature, together with the smooth sea which had been levelled by the deluge of rain that had fallen in torrents during the squall, that a few short hours only had passed away since the elements presented a scene so terrific as made the stoutest hearts quail with horror.

"That was a bit of a whiffle we had last night," said the boatswain to the young seaman, "it put me in mind of 'Jack Northwester' on the coast of Yankee-land. Howsomever, she 's a noble craft, and bears her canvass like a frigate. Well, well, I like a bit of a flurry sometimes, just by way of keeping my hand in; and hark'ee, messmate, I've cruised over this ground before, and had hard knocks and tough sarvice, and I'll miss my reck'ning if we do n't have some fun before we leave it. How is it? you look for all the world as if it was banyan day, or as if you was going

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to be flogged through a fleet. Not much like the chap you was last night in the bunt of the fore-topsail, when old Davy blowed his blast; or like the lad that passed the plait on the clew of the foresail, now and then taking a bit of a swim in the lee-scuppers, when this craft was diving and coming up, and shaking herself like a swan in a snow-storm."

"Any duty that is hazardous," replied the young seaman, "suits my present feelings, for I assure you I am quite weary of the dullness which steals over me, in spite of all my exertions to shake it off, for I had rather engage an enemy of double force, than fritter away my hours in idleness or inglorious ease. Yes, my friend," continued he, "if this craft were in the regular service, I should prefer an honorable death, in endeavoring to maintain my country's honor, than to be possessed of all the prize-money that is made by us during this cruise."

"I believe you," said the boatswain, "for I never saw a chap in my life that liked to fight an Englishman better than yourself. But come, messmate, before we have another dust with 'John Bull,' just spin out some more of your yarn."

The young seaman complied with the request, and proceeded as follows:

"I applied myself diligently to business, and obtained a competency for our support. All my leisure hours were spent in my parents' society, and by the most assiduous attention to their comfort, their time passed away cheerfully and happily. Two months rolled

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on, and such was the entire change in my character and habits, as well as the most untiring devotion to my honored parents, that the confidence and respect which I had forfeited by wild, dissolute habits, gradually became restored, and once more the feelings that led me to believe that I was an outcast in society, gave way to self-respect, induced by the reflection, that I was endeavoring to discharge my duty to those whom I had so deeply injured.

"During the whole of this period I neither saw nor heard from the detested gamester. I learned, however, that immediately after the fatal night that swept away the balance of my father's fortune by the villany of that infamous wretch, he went off to B——, where he passed for a gentleman of fortune. My passion for E——, though less ardent, was perhaps more refined; but I dared not hope that she yet retained the smallest attachment for one who had rendered himself unworthy of her confidence and esteem. I resolved, however, to obtain an interview, if possible, and learn my fate from her own lips, whether for weal or woe. After a lapse of some days, the desired interview was obtained. It was a meeting, however, in all respects like unto that of friends who had been separated for a season, and not at all with the ardor and warm aspirations of lovers. The interview, however, was agreeable, and afforded me great pleasure; and although there was an air of reserve on her part, yet when my eye met hers, that organ spoke volumes to my heart, for I was not deceived — it actually

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beamed with delight. Time flew swiftly on, and to my great astonishment I had already been two hours in the company of E——, but as yet had not ascertained any thing in reference to my future prospects, neither had I the courage to make known to her the object of my visit; for I was not now the heir to a fortune, neither was my reputation as spotless as I could desire, because my former habits had thrown around it a shade which had not been entirely dispelled, and time was necessary to redeem a character sullied by wild and dissipated conduct. I neither had the courage to solicit another interview, nor did I obtain a knowledge from her personally of my fate; nevertheless, her manner convinced me, that I was not the object of her hatred and scorn.

"This meeting, although not marked with that degree of warmth and ardor congenial to youthful hearts, yet appeared to me highly consistent in my present situation; for past experience had taught me to curb my naturally sanguine temperament. Hitherto I had been the victim of sudden impulses; consequently the result of my conduct threw me into difficulties of an unpleasant nature. I resolved, therefore, that my future course should atone for the many errors of which I had been guilty, and I did not despair of regaining the affections of her on whom I now felt depended my future happiness."

The hour of supper having arrived, the young seaman closed his narrative for the present, with the promise of continuing it at some future time.

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CHAPTER XVII.

CAPTURE OF A BRITISH LETTER OF MARQUE

THE watch had been roused from their lazy retreat after a hard sleep of two hours, on the soft side of a plank. The customary duties of the morning watch were being commenced, and the look-out was sent aloft. After the seaman had reached his post in the cross-trees, he quietly seated himself, supporting his back against the head of the mast; then his strengthened eye swept around a clear, unbroken horizon, until it stopped in the direction of one point abaft the beam, and after a long and attentive gaze he sung out at the top of his hoarse voice, "Sail ho!" For a few minutes all was excitement, but as it was now a dead calm, and very little appearance of wind, the chance was small to get within speaking distance shortly.

The duties of the morning watch, and breakfast being finished, the Cruiser was got into complete readiness for action. The great probability was, that the strange sail was a man-of-war, as it was not a position for merchant vessels to be in without convoy. It was a matter of little import to the officers or men, whether the stran-

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ger was a man-of-war or merchant vessel, for having so little to do in the last fifteen days, they were eager to wet their palates, and cared not whether it was a chase, or an action.

Hour after hour passed away, and no ripple or cat's-paw was seen on the surface of the ocean, neither was the bearing or distance of the two vessels altered. Two bells was struck, and not a change, the same interminable calm prevailed; but the young seaman who had the look-out aloft, reported that the stranger was a ship, having a breeze from the eastward and bearing down upon the Cruiser, her top-gallant-sails being lifted. The cat's-paw and over-falls came dancing over the deep, and before a half hour passed, the breeze was settled and steady.

"I hope the stranger will keep in the same mind as she is now," observed the Commander, "and we shall be better acquainted before dark."

Every yard was now trimmed to the breeze on the larboard tack, and a few minutes brought the stranger in sight from the deck, but as soon as her hull was lifted, she suddenly hauled close to the wind, on the same tack with the Cruiser.

"He has the weather-guage of us," continued the Commander, "and until we know something more about him, I should like to change positions."

"I am of the same opinion," replied the first lieutenant; "but that movement tells me that he is some fat merchantman, or letter of marque, perhaps, and calculated when he first saw us that he would make a prize."

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Innumerable were the conjectures in relation to the character of our neighbor. Again and again were the glasses put in requisition to see if any thing could be discovered to decide conflicting opinions. The stranger had taken in studding-sails and was close by the wind, bearing directly abeam of the Cruiser. All doubts that had been entertained of her character were now dispelled; she was certainly not a man-of-war, and even if she were an armed vessel, it was now apparent that she did not admire the looks of the Cruiser.

"That craft to windward," said the skipper, "does not appear like a sleepy merchantman; she carries a stout sail, square yards, and shows us as bold a side as a frigate, for she is as upright as a dish, and were it not for this move, and I believe it is only a manœuvre, I should decide that she was a man-of-war. However, we will swagger up to her, and if my conjecture is right, we shall have use for all our muslin shortly."

All the light sails were therefore got in readiness, and Long Tom was prepared to enter into conversation with the stranger, if required. The northeastern breeze freshened and blew briskly. It was now a fair trial of speed between the two vessels, but the Cruiser had the advantage, for she not only lay a point nearer to the wind, but actually head-reached quite as fast, so that by sunset the relative distance between the two was very much lessened, not being more than a half mile apart, and it became evident that the stranger was an Englishman, and would not risk an action if it could possibly be avoided. After night had set in, the Cruiser

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shortened sail to drop in the wake of the ship, so as to keep her close aboard, during the night. This manœuvre was effected, and by eight o'clock the Cruiser was about musket shot distant from the ship.

The night was clear, and the moon had risen and was calmly sailing on, far up in the blue ether, silvering the deep with her gentle radiance, and showering a flood of sparkles on every billowy crest, that rolled up and shivered in her light. Every where objects were discernible with as much distinctness as under the noonday sun. The breeze sang through the rigging with a joyous sound, singularly pleasing, after the silence and monotony of the fore part of the day; and the waves that parted beneath the cutwater, rolled glittering astern along the sides, while ever and anon, some billow larger than its fellows broke over the bow, sending its foam crackling back to the foremast. Around the deck the men were gathered each one beside his allotted gun, silently awaiting the moment of attack. The cutlasses had been served out, the boarding pikes and muskets were convenient for use; the balls had already been on deck, and the Cruiser only waited for some demonstration on the part of the foe to open the magazine, and commence the combat in earnest; but no manifestation was made, for she kept on her way under a cloud of sail, in profound silence, evidently wishing to avoid the combat altogether, or defer it until morning.

The morning dawn broke forth, and the first demonstration of attack on the part of the foe was given.

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The ports were thrown up and displayed eight pieces of cannon, and the English bunting removed all doubts respecting her character, which could not be misunderstood, for her broadside was poured into the Cruiser without further ceremony. The enemy's shot produced very little effect upon the Cruiser, only cutting away some ropes, and a few air-holes through the sails.

"You had better elevate the muzzle of your gun," said the old gunner, "and then mayhap you will cut away our trucks. Long Tom will pepper you after a different fashion, when it comes to his turn to speak."

As soon as the enemy had delivered her broadside, she bore away, and the contest became a running fight, the ship delivering her stern chasers in fine style, with some effect, but the Cruiser had not as yet fired a shot. Nevertheless, as she was superior in point of sailing, she closed in rapidly with the enemy, and took her position on the starboard quarter of the ship.

"It is a pity to wing that craft," said the gunner, as he stood by Long Tom, impatiently waiting the command to fire, "so I'll send a decent messenger to that quarter-deck."

The fire from the enemy did considerable execution, and the crew, impatient of restraint, and exasperated at the sight of blood, were eager to lay along side, and they did not hesitate to speak their minds to that effect.

"Very well," said the Commander, evidently pleased at the impetuosity of the men, "in twenty minutes we shall be alongside of that ship, and I expect every man will do his duty. Prepare, then, for boarding."

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Boarding the Letter-of-Marque

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Just then a shot from the enemy cut away the Cruiser's main-topmast.

"Is Long Tom ready?" shouted the skipper.

"Aye, aye, sir," was the response.

"Fire!"

A loud cracking was heard immediately after the discharge of Long Tom, and when the smoke cleared away, the enemy's quarter-boardrail and taffrail were cut away. The compliment was immediately repeated by Long Tom with great effect, and the two eighteen pound carronades, filled with grape and langrage shot, were delivered in a manner that drove the Englishmen from their quarters, after which the Cruiser shot alongside and grappled the mizzen-chains of the ship.

"Boarders away!" shouted the skipper.

The assailants, with the young seaman and boatswain at their head, boarded on the starboard quarter, rushing with an impetuosity that drove the Englishmen as far as the main-mast. Here they once more rallied, and the conflict on the part of the foe, exasperated as they were at the prospects of losing their ship, was so furious, that for a moment the assailants retreated; but the brave young seaman and the boatswain, perceiving the check of their shipmates, threw themselves into the hottest of the fight, and with voices that reverberated far away on the ocean, shouted, "Follow us, shipmates, she is ours!"

The dexterous arm of the young seaman and the science of the boatswain, dealt out destruction to all who had the temerity to oppose them, while the undaunted

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first lieutenant drove the Englishmen on the starboard side. For a short time the wild uproar of the fight, the groans of the wounded and dying, baffles all description. The conflict, however, was soon decided, for the crew of the ship, consisting of mongrel Frenchmen and Englishmen together, were driven by the furious Yankees as far as the fore-mast, and then sung out for quarter. At the same moment the English bunting was hauled down, and the contest was at an end. This beautiful prize-ship was a Gurnsey letter of marque, mounting sixteen guns, with a complement of fifty men. This ship, with two heavy British brigs of the same character, had captured an American merchantman. The captain, a first officer, and three men, were now prisoners on board. The high excitement of the battle, the desperate resistance of the ship's crew, together with the sight of their wounded, produced a savage ferocity among the Yankee tars, that no power or exertion on the part of the officers could restrain, and it broke out in a scene of indiscriminate robbery and plunder, which could not be suppressed until the old seamen united with the officers, and only then by force of arms, an effectual check was made to these outrages.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

A DASH AT THE FLEET

THE scenes of excitement being over, and the prize being ordered to the United States, it became a matter of necessity to make some disposition of the prisoners, for they were not only an encumbrance, but the safety of the Cruiser demanded their release. It was a deplorable sight to behold the prisoners stripped of all their dunnage. The author being now identified as one of the number composing the officers of the Cruiser, suffered also in the general pillage of the ship; but to the honor of the Commander and officers be it spoken, they instituted a plan of search, which proved entirely effectual to the restoration of every article of clothing to their respective owners, and thus, at least, some of the miseries of their situation were alleviated.

In a few days we fell in with a Portuguese schooner, bound to the Western Islands. This being a favorable opportunity for releasing the prisoners, they were all put on board with the exception of a few, who joined the Cruiser.

We were now clear of our encumbrance. But the manning of several prizes, besides the loss of life in the

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serious actions, reduced the number of the crew to about sixty souls, and the greater part of these were any thing but seamen, yet they were capable of the most daring acts of desperation; for when no other opportunity presented to exhibit their villanous propensitiy, they would rob each other. This was carried on to such an extent, that the shirts of those who were sleeping in their hammocks were cut off from their backs. A circumstance of this character was perpetrated on the person of one of the re-captured American seamen. This poor fellow had six doubloons sewed up in a flannel shirt, which he wore next to his skin, and as this matter was kept a profound secret, he was under the impression that it was known only to himself. One night, however, after he had been quietly stowed away in his hammock for about four hours, he was astonished and mortified beyond measure, when he turned out, to find himself minus shirt and doubloons. He kept quiet until the next morning, when he related to me the circumstance of the robbery, which was immediately communicated to the Commander, and the following plan was instituted to recover the lost treasure.

All hands were piped to quarters, the muster roll was then called, and when it was ascertained that all were on deck, the object of this manœuvre was made known to them; the gratings were then fastened down, and all hands quietly submitted to a personal search; this being done without any discovery, the petty officers were sent to overhaul the berth-deck. After a long and diligent search, the stolen money was found,

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stowed away in the fore-peak, very carefully concealed in a box containing balls of thread and twine. The recovery of the money in the box was the means of finding out the miserable culprit, upon whom was inflicted a severe punishment, after which this wretched practice was measurably suppressed.

A few days after the events related in the preceding chapter, I was roused up in the morning watch, by the exciting cry of "The fleet, the fleet!" This was the long looked for, and much desired object for which the Cruiser had been furrowing these seas, to the imminent hazard of being taken.

It was a clear, bland morning; the eastern breeze blew gently, the sea was perfectly smooth, and a defined horizon stretched far away in a long, unbroken line to the south-west. The sun already measured twenty degrees altitude, and was ascending rapidly, while his brilliant rays reflected on the ocean a light so intense that no eye, however strong, could steadfastly gaze thereon. Myriads of silvery images shot forth from the crested billows, as they rolled along and broke from the impetus of the wind. It was a day when objects on the surface of the ocean could be seen at the greatest distance, and the situation and bearings of the fleet were most favorable, being at least ten miles to the leeward of the Cruiser.

"We've got the weather-guage of them chaps," observed the boatswain to the young seaman, "and if our skipper holds this advantage till dark, why then I'll miss my reck'ning, but we'll have some of them fat

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merchantmen before morning; just enough to finish our cruise, and be off with flying colors to Yankee land."

"It is true, our prospects are fair this morning," replied the young seaman, "and I sincerely hope that no dark cloud may obscure them. For my own part, however, disappointments have so often fallen to my lot, that they have changed the temperament of my mind. I have closely observed the conduct of our Commander, ever since the affair off Madeira, and his rashness is the most prominent trait of his character, and I fear, may yet lead to disastrous consequences. We are now too near that fleet, and you are well aware that one false movement may involve the fate of the Cruiser, with the loss of life, and the incarceration of the crew in a British prison during the remainder of the war, and thus the advantages we now have, would be forever cut off; while, on the other hand, a little prudence and judgment would ensure a profitable cruise, and thus we might return to America with good fortune."

"Why it is true what you say, messmate," replied the boatswain, "for I've just been hauling my thinking tacks aboard, and says I to myself, if John Bull gets a squint at us, why then, d'ye see, the jig's up, for the convoy will chase us away from the fleet yonder, so that it will take this craft, clean heels as she's got, to fetch up to that fleet in a week, and in my way of thinking, instead of edging off, I'd just bear to windward."

As the young seaman was about to reply, orders were issued to the boatswain to pipe all hands to quarters.

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"Whew!" said the boatswain, "what's in the wind now? are we going to capture the whole of that fleet, convoy and all?"

All hands were soon on deck, and every preparation was made for action. A consultation was now held on the quarter-deck, the purport of which was, that any nearer proximity to the fleet during the day, would be hazardous; opinions were given, until at length the Commander decided to bear up, and run down to the fleet immediately. The first lieutenant remonstrated against this proceeding, and the remainder of the officers were unanimous in their dissent to the measure, and hesitated not to express their entire disapprobation to such a rash act. It was not long before the intention of the Commander was known fore and aft. Many of the crew said they would do no duty; others were for packing up their dunnage; in short, the greater part of the crew and officers made no other calculation but to be captured. Every manœuvre and remonstrance was, however, in vain, for the Commander, after settling a plan for action, could not be moved, either by remonstrance or otherwise. The light sails were therefore got in readiness, and the order was given to bear away four points; two prize-masters were sent aloft for the look-out, and the Cruiser, with slackened sheets, moved noiselessly through the water at the rate of seven knots. The relative distance between the fleet and the Cruiser lessened every minute, and scarcely had an hour elapsed, when by the proximity, the hulks of this numerous fleet were seen above the surface of the ocean.

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No sight could be more magnificent and noble than this fleet presented. Upwards of four hundred sail of large ships and brigs, with a fair wind, under a cloud of canvass, were rolling majestically on the great deep, and from the position of the Cruiser, they appeared to form regular lines. Such a sight under other circumstances, would have created universal delight; but the Cruiser was incurring great hazard without any positive object in view, and without the least probability of making any captures; on the contrary, the chances were three to one against her. All these circumstances threw a deep shade of gloom among the crew and officers, and quite banished from the mind the beauty of a scene which would have attracted the intense gaze and wonder of a stoic. The Cruiser had now reached within a mile of the fleet, and it was reported from the mast-head that the several ships and brigs were signalizing; this report was corroborated by the first lieutenant, who had the spy-glass in requisition for the last half hour, gazing intently upon the enemy.

"They have discovered our character," replied he to the Commander, "which has thrown them into great excitement, for you perceive the extreme right of the line has bore up, while the van are all hove to, and the rear are crowding every stitch of canvass to close in with the convoy; and now may I ask," he continued to the Commander, "what plan of operation do you intend to pursue next?"

The Commander paused for a moment, and appeared to have no definite plan matured, but recovering him-

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self immediately, promptly replied, "We will speak with that ship you see there, about two points on the larboard bow."

The Cruiser was hauled up immediately and Long Tom was got in readiness, and the old gunner gruffly observed that his friend was going to hold a very unbecoming conversation, and one from which he would gain no credit.

The Cruiser now ranged up boldly towards the ship, and although the enemy was under a press of canvass, the former overhauled her hand over hand, and when in speaking distance the Englishman was ordered to heave to. He however with undaunted firmness heeded not the threats, but kept steadily on his course, until the patience of the Commander became exhausted, and he madly ordered the gunner to let Long Tom speak to him between wind and water.

The officers again remonstrated by saying that the report would bring the convoy upon their heels immediately, and then the chances of escape would be extremely doubtful. But they might as well have held their breath, for the order was given to fire; but instead of the shot passing between wind and water, the mizen-mast was cut away.

At this moment the mast-head-man reported that a frigate and sloop-of-war was bearing down under press of canvass towards the Cruiser. The ship although in much confusion, did not heave to, while a general anxiety prevailed on board the Cruiser for their own safety, as the hulls of the men-of-war became plainly

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visible from the deck. Long Tom was re-charged and the Cruiser was hauled off from the ship, while every sail was set, and she boldly ran through the fleet, Long Tom paying his compliments to all within speaking distance, cutting away the spars of some and hulling others, while she bounded through the water like a dolphin, and the fleet scampered away like so many deer with hounds on their trail; but what with luffing and bearing away the sloop of war had gained rapidly on the chase, and it became necessary to take every advantage in flight. The Cruiser was therefore kept away out of the fleet, and it soon became evident that the chase was no laggard, for although the Cruiser was favored with her best chances of sailing, yet the sloop of war perceptibly gained on the chase, but the frigate dropped astern.

"We are likely to have a pretty day's work on't," said the boatswain to the young seaman, "and that madcap skipper of ours, although he has had some fun with the Englishmen, yet I'll miss my reck'ning if that chap astarn won't have the best conversation after all, if our old plan of trimming ship don't succeed, for you see messmate she is overhauling us. Now I don't mind having a bit of dust with an equal chance, but that twenty gun brig opposite is great odds against this Cruiser and our crew."

The sloop of war was now within gun shot, and her bow-chasers were sent after the Cruiser in rapid succession, but without effect. The old expedient of trimming was now resorted to, and the good effects were

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plainly perceived. In less than half an hour from this time it was evident the Cruiser gained upon the chase, for every shot fell short, and in an hour and a half the Cruiser luffed up, while Long Tom occasionally paid his compliments to the sloop of war. The chase was continued for about four hours, during which time the Cruiser gained half a league on the chase, and the Englishman no doubt believing that the Cruiser was sufficiently far to leeward of the fleet, and it would be impossible for her to overhaul them during the night, gave up the chase and hauled upon a wind.

From this time, the confidence which ought to rest in the Commander by the officers and crew, was gradually withdrawn. The events of this day had proved him to be entirely incapable of the management of a private armed vessel, for this mad freak had not only destroyed the object of the cruise, but it had also uselessly put in jeopardy the lives of the crew, and had well nigh sealed the fate of the Cruiser; it was the means, also of prolonging the cruise, and blasted the prospects which bid so fair in the morning of that day to end in brilliant success. Notwithstanding great chagrin reigned among the officers and crew, yet after all this headstrong and daring act, and the management of the Cruiser in the chase, in some degree, at least, atoned for the rashness and impetuosity of the Commander.

"The events of this day have concluded like many of my history," observed the young seaman to the boatswain, "and when the sun rose with all its splendor this morning, and when, too, the hopes of

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the crew were wrought up to the greatest pitch at the fair prospect, not only of gain, but also of ending our cruise, even then you are aware, my friend, that my hopes were far from sanguine that this day would end pleasantly and profitably, and I cannot help the presentiment, that although sunshine, and fair weather, and fair prospects marked the commencement of this cruise, yet to me, dark clouds will rise, and misfortunes fall around this vessel. Yes, my friend," he continued, "whether it may be by the tornado, or the hurricane, or by the enemy's shot, yet I fear this craft will lay her timbers beneath the billows of the ocean."

"Why, messmate," replied the boatswain, "I just had some misgivings of that sort myself; but what's the odds, if a sailor does his duty, whether he is sent under hatches by a blast of wind, or by a streak of lightning, or by the enemy's shot making daylight through him? I say, what's the odds, if he goes to kingdom come with a clean set of papers, won't he be ready to answer to his name cheerfully when the muster-roll is called at the last day?"

"It is true," replied the young seaman mournfully; "but then something more is necessary than the mere discharge of our duty to our fellow-men, in order to ensure a peaceful end and eternal happiness in the other world. Yes, my friend, although we are true messmates and friends, and although so far as our duty is concerned toward our fellow-men, we have endeavored to discharge it faithfully, yet, we are both of us exceedingly deficient in the discharge of our duty toward

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God in order to obtain a passport for another and a better world."

"Well, messmate," replied the boatswain, "since we are upon that tack, and you're high larnt, I'd just like to know how a chap's to square away by the lifts and braces, and trim his sails, and get safe into the good Port?"

"The Bible is the word of God," observed the young seaman, "and may be properly compared to a chart. On this chart, then, the latitude and longitude of the good Port is correctly laid down; here, every rock, shoal, quicksand and breaker, is faithfully and clearly pointed out. The true course is also laid down, and what is of still greater advantage to poor sailors, the track is marked off on this chart from this world to the broad Bay of Heaven, so that we may correctly learn our position each day, for there can be no mistakes in this log-book. There is one thing more that is necessary to ensure a safe passage, and happy entrance into Port, and that is, we must take on board the Heavenly Pilot. Now this Pilot is not only an able seaman, but a most skillful navigator; he has never lost a ship, neither has he run any on shore, or carried away a spar or rope-yarn; but then it is necessary that the strictest attention should be given to all his orders; if we fail to do this, he will leave the ship, and then there are nine chances out of ten that she will become a perfect wreck on the shoals of Destruction. There is one thing more; when you take this Pilot on board, you must not doubt his ability and power to get you safe into Port; if you do,

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you will be likely either to disobey his commands, or there will be an indifference on your part to obey them promptly; and thus you may weary his patience, so that he may leave you to the mercy of the winds and the waves."

Here the conversation closed for the present, with the request on the part of the boatswain to the young seaman, that he would point out the way in which he should get this Pilot on board. The young seaman promised to do so at some future opportunity, and as the first watch was at an end, they both turned in for the night.

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CHAPTER XIX.

DISAFFECTION OF THE CREW, LUDICROUS STORY FROM JIMMY

EVERY day brought with it fresh proofs of the general disaffection of the crew and officers, and a withdrawal of that confidence from the Commander which is at all times necessary to ensure a good state of discipline, as well as the success of the cruise. Nor was this disaffection kept silent, for they hesitated not to declare their sentiments aloud; and although the Commander affected to turn a deaf ear, yet he plainly saw that it was necessary to have some counteracting resource in order that this general disorder might not break out into an open mutiny. He saw evidently that his own imprudence and rashness had brought about this state of dislike, and also was the means of prolonging the cruise. The chances also of falling in with British merchantmen were now comparatively small, and even if they did so, of course they would be running ships well manned and armed, prepared for desperate resistance. All these circumstances combined made it necessary to attempt some daring exploit, speedy capture, or some other resource to draw off the minds of the crew and officers, in order that he

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might regain their confidence; as to the two former of these expedients nothing as yet had transpired to effect his plan. There was a resource, however, always at hand, and this was no other than the musical powers of Jimmy. He had gradually ingratiated himself into the good graces of the officers, and was now more than ever a favorite with the crew. In their estimation his fife discoursed eloquent music, so that with the concord of sweet sounds, and his irresistible tact in relating quaint stories, he was at this time, especially, a most important character. The little musician, therefore, employed all his skill in both branches: that is, when his fife was silent, the other member, namely his tongue, made up the deficiency, so that between one and the other, Jimmy's powers, (though unconsciously,) effected for the Commander that which his rashness had in some degree lost; at any rate it served for the time being to keep down the spirit of insubordination, which if carried out, would have proved disastrous, and put an end to the cruise.

It was at the conclusion of one of those days of merriment and glee, inspired by the musical powers of Jimmy, after four hours of hard fifing, that you might have seen him in the midst of a large group of seamen, quietly seated on the main-deck, preparing to spin out a long yarn, to the no small gratification of the listeners, who were ready with mouths, eyes and ears open to swallow every word that proceeded from the mouth of their favorite, while Jimmy, coiling up his short legs, twisted his mouth, and threw his small eyes over

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the company with such an expression of comic humor, that they simultaneously broke out into an immoderate fit of laughter. After the uproar had ceased, there was a profound silence, and Jimmy, with his fife in one hand, and with the two fingers of the other, as his custom was, thrust into his breeches pocket, gave two or three loud hems, and began his yarn as follows:

"Gentlemen," said Jimmy, "I thought as how when there would be a good time, I'd give you a story about myself; and as we hav n't much to do about these parts, why it's just about the right time to come at it at once. Well, though I can't boast of being kin to any high-bred folks, and as I don't exactly remember who my parents were, only by hearsay; yet if they was not high bred, nor high larnt, they were high metal; for as I was told, my father was the bully of the high-binders, and my mother used to go by the name, down to the Hook, of fighting Nance. How this was I can't tell, for all I remember of her is a sound drubbing that I had from her; and I afterwards larnt, she filled up her days in the respectable condition of a house servant at the Hook, and my father was clapped in the penitentiary just for knocking a man down, and making off with his pocket-book, where he finished his days, and I was left upon the wide world to make my fortune. As good luck would have it, gentlemen, you see I had a kind of a notion in them young days of mine about singing and music, and so after I had lost my parents, (which by the way didn't care much about me,) why then I was thrown upon the wide world, to get my living the best

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way I could. Sometimes I slept in the cellar, and sometimes in the garret, when any one was kind enough to take me in. Well, in the day time I used to stroll about the streets of York, and beg what I could to live on, and then I would go about and listen to the music. But what most of all delighted me was, to stand by the place where they listed sogers; the rattle of the drums made me jump for joy: but when the fifer played on his instrument, (here Jimmy brandished his fife three or four times over his head in great triumph,) I used to laugh and cry all in the same breath, and so I thought I'd try to beg money enough to buy a fife and larn to play myself. Well, it was not long before I got together enough, and away I goes to a music shop, and got the fife, aye, and paid the money down for it too; so I spent many long days and nights before I could larn to play one tune, but perseverance and hard trying made me, as near as I can tell, not only a pretty good fife-player when I was about fifteen years old, but I could sing a pretty good song and tell a pretty funny story too, so that I used to go by the name of the little fifer. Well, one day, as I was trying my best to play the President's March, close by a beer shop, the sound of my fife got a considerable crowd around me; so after I had finished playing,

"'That's not bad,' says one.

"'Where did you larn to play the fife?' says another.

"'Why,' says a third, 'he'll do to fife for the York Volunteers.'

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"At the sound of these last words, I pricked up my ears, and was just about to ask a question, when a short, thick, red-faced man came up and inquired where I lived. 'Why, may't please your honor,' says I, 'I've got no father nor mother, no home; and if I must tell the truth, I live in the streets, only when some good person lets me sleep in his cellar, garret, or stable.'

"'Well,' says he to me, 'how would you like to come and live with me; I'll put you into a genteel way of getting along, and if you mind your eye, it would make a man of you.'

"I couldn't help making a baby of myself at this offer, for somehow or other I felt queer, and so I thanked him, and told him I was ready to sarve him in any way; so I thrust my fife into my bosom, and walked off with this same man, until we came to a small house, with a sign before the door of a large bell; so we went into this house, and there was a good many people setting round different tables, with mugs, and glasses, and pipes, and tobacco, while some was drinking, some was swearing, and many was smoking, and the room nearly choked me, for it was in a cloud of smoke. After I had got my breath, I looked up at one end of the room, and it seemed to be all closed in from the other part, and there was barrels and kegs, and great pots, and pint pots, and half-pint pots, and when they wanted to put these out of sight, they had a red curtain which they drawed right across that part of the room. While I stood looking on, the gentleman called,

"'Here, my man,' says he, 'what's your name?'

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"'That's just what I can't tell you,' says I, for my father went by the name of the bully, and my mother by the name of fighting Nance; so between them both, it was hard to tell which name to go by; and then I had no name at all from them, but after I turned out to make my own living, I always went by the name of Pimple with those that knew me, because they said my head was so small." Here Jimmy's mouth expanded, his nostrils dilated, and his little eyes beamed with a quaint expression, and simultaneously the little musician and the whole company broke out into an immoderate fit of laughter; for it will be recollected that Jimmy had the largest head of any man on board.

After the excitement produced by this last sally was over, the little musician proceeded:

"'Pimple,' said the gentleman, 'that's an odd name anyhow, but howsomever, we'll just take off the two last letters, by way of short'ning it, and now you understand you're to go by the name of Pimp. And now Mr. Pimp, said the landlord,' for I found out it was no other than himself who kept this house, 'if you will exert yourself and sarve my interest, why then you shall have the best of good living with the servants, and sixpence a week for pocket money.'

"I thanked him, and asked him what I should go about.

"'Why,' says he, 'you must be a kind of porter to this bar-room.'

"'And what's that?' says I.

"'Why,' says he, 'first and foremost, you must larn

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to sing well, for that will fetch in the customers; and then you must clean boots, scrub the floor, tend the taproom, and every thing else that's wanting; and hark 'ee, Mr. Pimp, if you are a good boy, your wages shall be raised very soon.'

"I thanked him kindly, but I didn't much like the last work he spoke of, for I thought to do every thing that was wanting was a little more than I could do; howsomever, I didn't much care, so long as I had my fife, and had time to sing songs; so I went on cheerfully to my new business, and it was not long before I got into the good graces of the landlord and his customers, for my fife and my songs brought many a one of them to the house; and this was a good thing for me, as well as the landlord, for many a sixpence and shilling I used to get when I pleased them with my songs.

"Well, things went on in this way, until I became a man of big importance, for I sarved the landlord's interest, and he, to make it up, gave me all his old clothes to wear out, and raised my wages, and got me a place, sure enough, to fife for the York Volunteers. But as the saying is, there's an end of all things; so my good fortune was not to last for ever. So you see, gentlemen, I was one day at dinner, cutting off the leavings of a leg of mutton with the cook, and she was a short, thick, squabby, red-faced, one-eyed Irish gal.

"Says she to me, 'Sure Misther Pimple, I've been just a thinking we were made for each other.'

"'Why?' says I.

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"'Why,' says she, 'aren't we enuff alike to be mother's son and darter.'

"'Why that may be,' says I.

"'And isn't it I,' says she, 'that saw the likeness the moment I clapped my fut in these doors.'

"'Well,' says I, 'we may be something alike, except,'—and then I put my finger on one eye,—'you know what I mean,' says I.

"'Mane! that I do; heaven be praised, I got one lift; and sure, Misther Pimple, aren't three eyes betwane two of us better nor none at all?'

"'That's very true,' says I, 'but what has your one eye to do with my two eyes?'

"'Sure,' says she, 'won't you be afther making me spake out.'

"'O, yes,' says I, 'I'd like to hear it all.'

"'Well then,' says she, 'if I must, I must; and to tell ye the thruth, ever since the first time I darkened these doors, and heard the sound of your whistle, didn't it go to my heart, and when ye was blowing the swate tune of Erin-go-bragh, didn't it put me in mind of the soil where I was bred and born.'

"'Did it though,' says I; 'that's not the first time that the sound of my fife has made a gal's heart jump, aye, and her heels too, for the matter of that.'

"'Sure, Misther Pimp,' says she, 'but you're a coaxer,' and here Katy, for that was her name, begun to be very melancholy.

"'Och! sure Misther Pimp, isn't it I that's getting tired of this kind of life, and isn't it you that takes up

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my thoughts, to change the way of getting my bread.'

"'Well, Katy,' says I, 'what kind of a change would you like?'

"'That's just what I'll be afther telling you; isn't it I that's been thinking that a nate little room would be a snug way of getting our bread together; and is n't it we that looks like two pase, that it's a God's pity to separate us?'

"'Oh ho! Katy,' says I, 'are you there? but how shall we fix it?'

"'God's blessing be upon you, Misther Pimp; but is'nt it I that's been thinking about my confession, and won't we go together, and afther Father O'Conner, God bless his sowl, has pardoned my sins, won't we just be afther asking him to marry us.' Here Katy simpered and laughed, and dropped a tear out of one eye, while the other was as dry as a powder horn, as she stammered out, 'What's your mind to that, Misther Pimp?'

"'Why,' says I 'that would be a change of life, sure enough, and I don't think it would be a very bad one; so Katy laughed, and I sung, 'Come haste to the wedding;' and so after we fixed the night for confession, we both parted very happy.

"Well, things went on swimmingly from this time, but somehow or other I got jealous of Katy, for the sound of my fife brought the grenadier Irish sodger man to the tap-room, and so he scraped 'quaintance with Katy. I could see it, for she didn't talk much after this about the 'nate little room.' Well, the night came on that we fixed for confession, and so I puts my best clothes on,

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and goes down to the kitchen for Katy. When I got in, 'Are you there, Misther Pimp?' says she; 'better late nor never.'

"Just as I was going to say something to her, in walks the Irish sodger man.

"'Good avening, Misthress O'Flagherty.'

"'Good avening to ye, Misther O'Donegan.'

"'How is it wid yer health this avening?' said he.

"'Never was better, be God's blessing,' says she.

"'Sure,' says he, 'don't you look for all the world like Pegg McGrath, that used to set the buther-milk and petates before me, afther a hard day's drill in Killkenny.'

"'Isn't it I,' says Katy, 'that's been thinking about swate Ireland ever since the first night we had our chat together.'

"Well," said the little musician, "they went on, talking about swate Ireland, 'till I thought it was time to go to confession; then says I, 'Katy, have you forgot your promise?'

"'Promise!' says she, in a very loud voice, 'is it you that would be afther insulting a vartuous 'oman, when she's talking wid a gintleman about her counthry?'

"'Oh no!' says I, 'but then this is the night you promised to go to confession.'

"'Och! botheration, not a word of it, you spalpeen.'

"'Yes,' says I, 'but Katy remember'—

"'Remember what?' she bawled out, 'do ye mane to say and tell this gintleman here that I am not a vartuous 'oman, ye duck-legged, pigeon-toed,'—here she

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was going on with a long string of names, and I looked round and saw the tall grenadier sodger on his feet, coming toward me with a fierce look in his face; so as the door was very near and the time for confession was now too late, I just thought I would back out, and leave the sodger and Katy to spend the evening together."

The listeners to Jimmy's story could hold in no longer; and when he had finished the last sentence, they broke out into a roar of laughter. When silence was restored, they questioned Jimmy as to his future operations.

"Well," continued the little musician, "it was not long after this that Katy and the grenadier sodger went to confession, and Father O'Conner made them man and wife; so after this, I got somewhat melancholy, and thinks I to myself, this is not the place for me, so I'll get as far off from it as I can; so, gentlemen, as the war made a great talk, and as I could n't think of remaining longer with my old master, I thought I'd try my luck in the wars, and as I heard great talk about this vessel, you see, gentlemen, I went directly and put my name down on the articles."

When the little musician had finished his narrative, a score of voices bawled out for a song. Jimmy complied with the request, and as former associations were called up, to use his own language, he observed he would sing to drive away his melancholy, and forthwith struck up the famous song of "Hard, hard is my fate."

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CHAPTER XX.

BOARDING AT NIGHT.

THERE is no service connected with naval warfare that is attended with so much peril and hazard as two vessels in collision, boarding; but when this service is executed in the night, it is infinitely more hazardous, because the assailed has the advantage of concealment; and further, if the actual force of the enemy is not correctly ascertained, it is always considered rashness to attempt it unless the assailants consist of a much greater force than the repellants. Many instances during the war will serve to illustrate the position here advanced. The following is one instance among many others. It will be recollected that the privateer Prince de Neufchatel, Captain Oudinot, was chased into Nantucket Roads by the British frigate Endymion. As it fell calm, the privateer, by the aid of the sweeps, pulled into the Roads beyond the frigate's guns; she determined, however, to carry the privateer by boarding. Perceiving the disposition of the frigate, Captain Oudinot made every preparation for a determined and spirited resistance, and although there were but twenty men on board of the privateer, (as they had

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sent them off to man the different prizes,) yet the undaunted courage of Captain Oudinot and his men did not quail at the very superior force of the enemy. Seven boats from the frigate, including the launch, were manned with one hundred and fifty of their choicest seamen, and despatched for the awful conflict. Captain Oudinot took the precaution to have the privateer well greased all round, his boarding nettings triced up, and every port closed in; he then cut holes sufficiently large through the ports, to point a musket at the assailant. A match was then lighted, and it was unanimously agreed to blow up the privateer, rather than to let her fall into the hands of the Englishmen.

The boats of the frigate came boldly up to the conflict, receiving a heavy fire of round, grape, and langrage from the privateer's guns, which completely disabled two boats with the loss of many lives. Not in the least daunted by this severe check, and now reduced to five boats, they pulled gallantly alongside of the privateer, when a most desperate and sanguinary strife ensued. The Englishmen fought to desperation, but every attempt to gain the deck was met and repelled with great loss on the part of the British, while the assailed were comparatively secure under the shelter of the bulwarks, which were impervious to the musket balls and pikes of the assailants; many of them were shot down through the holes made in the ports, and others, in attempting to climb up the sides, were either piked, or from their inability to hold

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on, (from the quantity of grease on the sides,) met their fate by drowning. I had this report from a seaman composing one of the crew of the privateer, who assured me that he shot and piked seven Englishmen from the hawse-hole of the privateer. This bloody battle lasted nearly two hours, and with the exception of two boats belonging to the English frigate, which made their way back, all were literally cut to pieces, and the loss of life on the part of the British was fearful, while that of the Americans was comparatively small.

Since the dash at the fleet, nothing transpired tc arouse excitement, or to drive away those feelings of uneasiness which had gathered around the officers in the wardroom. They were not long destined, however, to remain in this state of inactivity, for just at the conclusion of one of those meals, the coarseness of which generally brought on some angry debate, the exciting cry of "S-a-i-l h-o!" was heard from the mast-head, and soon the boatswain's pipe sounded "A-l-l h-a-n-d-s m-a-k-e s-a-i-l a-h-o-y!" In a very short time the Cruiser was under a cloud of canvass, and her course on the trail of the stranger. The necessary inquiries were now made, such as, "How far is she off?" "What does she look like?" &c., to all of which interrogatories the masthead-man replied, viz. "that she was scarcely discernible from the topgallant-yard, and as to her character or her course, he could give no definite answer." As the day had now advanced, and as the hour was one o'clock, P. M., it was a matter of great

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uncertainty, unless there was great disparity in the sailing of the two vessels, whether they could overhaul her before night.

The greatest anxiety prevailed throughout the Cruiser, for an hour had passed away, and no perceptible difference was discovered in the relative distance of the chase, and hope, which had animated the countenances of the crew, now settled into a kind of despondency, for the most sanguine on board well knew that it would be impossible to ascertain her character before night, consequently fears were entertained she would elude the vigilance of the Cruiser under its cover. Add to this, the wind now blew stiffly at W. S. W., and the weather wore a very threatening aspect; heavy clouds rose up in enormous piles in the western board, and the scud was driven rapidly to the eastward by the increasing gale, while the mist and rain, were driven along by fitful gusts, which ever and anon blew with violence. The sea, which until this time had been comparatively smooth, rose to a considerable height, heaving up heavy black masses of water, while the crested billows on the top broke, and the dashing foam, with silvery light, sparkled amid the angry element. The light sails were all taken in, and the Cruiser bounded over the waves, with the rapidity of a fiery courser that had been urged to his utmost speed, and the spars groaned and bent, as if unequal to the torture of bearing the immense press of canvass, and threatened every moment by their overburdened weight, either to capsize the Cruiser, or go by the board.

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The mist had by this time enveloped the Cruiser, and the violence of the wind had driven it far to leeward, so that the stranger could not be seen. Sail after sail was taken in, as the gale increased in violence, and all hopes were now at an end of overhauling the chase, as it became a matter of necessity to get the Cruiser away before night, and even should it clear away, it would be impossible to range alongside of the stranger, as the collision would endanger both the vessels and the lives of the crews. Hour after hour rolled away, while the tempest increased in fury, the rain fell in torrents, and the vision was entirely obscured by the heavy mist which had now completely surrounded the vast expanse of waters and the whole horizon. After the canvass had been reduced, and the light spars sent down from aloft, and the Cruiser nearly stripped of her dress to bear up under the contending elements, a consultation was held by the Commander and first lieutenant in regard to the best method of proceeding, so as to keep (if possible,) within sight of the stranger, and be prepared, should the mist clear away, and the gale break, to renew the chase, and ascertain her character. As the Cruiser was that day in the latitude of the Capes of Lisbon, and as the stranger was steering away to the eastward, it was thought by the Commander, that she might be a licensed vessel bound to the south of Europe with supplies for the troops on the Peninsula. His counsel, therefore, was to keep the Cruiser on the same course that she was steering when she lost sight of the stranger. The first lieutenant dis-

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sented from this opinion, intimating that she must be some running ship, well manned and armed, and the truth of this position, he affirmed, was scarcely to be doubted, from the fact of her superior sailing.

After various opinions had been given, it was resolved to steer away to the eastward, keeping as near as possible on the same course, as when the stranger was last seen. Night now came on, and brought with it no cessation of the tempest; the wind blew in strong gusts, and with frightful intonations that shrieked through the blocks and rigging, as if proclaiming the funeral dirge of the Cruiser and her crew. It was just as eight bells were struck, before the commencement of the first watch at night, that the wind shifted suddenly to the northwest, and blew with redoubled violence. The cross sea occasioned by this sudden interruption of the southwester, had well nigh proved fatal to the Cruiser. As it was, the reefed sail, (which was the only sail set,) was blown away from the bolt-rope, and the craft was kept before the wind to the southeast, while the dashing foam, from the effect of both winds, broke with a violent concussion over the Cruiser's decks, and she scud away four hours before the fury of the tempest, at the rate of twelve knots. The hopes that were entertained a few hours before the commencement of this gale of taking a fat prize, were now entirely banished from every mind, and unless the stranger had taken the same squall in the same way, and its violence obliged her to keep before the wind, there did not seem to be any probability that the

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Cruiser would fall in with her again. As soon as the violence of the northwester had abated, and a new foresail bent, the Cruiser was hauled up again to the eastward. The heavy cloud, which until this time had risen up in the western board, now lifted from the horizon, and a long line of blue sky stretched far away, and the northwestern scud rolled along rapidly, settling away to the eastward. At midnight the wind lessened to a moderate gale, the sky was perfectly clear and cloudless, and the heavens were dressed with innumerable glittering stars and planets, while the whole scene presented a widely different aspect, from the former part of the night.

At daybreak in the morning, the sea was comparatively smooth, although the wind still blew stiffly from the northwest. As soon as the mist cleared away, and the horizon well-defined, the look-out at the mast-head sung out, "S-a-i-l h-o! far away on the starboard beam." Whether this was the same vessel or not which was seen the previous day, could not be determined from the immense distance that she was off. The Cruiser, however, was immediately hauled on the wind in chase, and sail after sail was packed on, and such was the rapidity with which she flew over the billows, that in less than an hour, it was clearly ascertained that the stranger was a ship standing to the eastward. Nothing could exceed the joy and excitement of the crew, for although the stranger forereached rapidly, yet from her appearance and manœuvres, the practised eye of a seaman could not be mistaken as to

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her character. The appearance of her canvass, however, did not indicate her to be an Englishman, and the general opinion was the same as that expressed by the Commander on the previous day, viz. that she was a licensed vessel bound to the South of Europe. At meridian, although the relative distance of the two vessels was somewhat lessened, yet it was not sufficient to warrant the belief or hope that she could be either overhauled, or so near a proximity as to ascertain her character. This opinion was corroborated at sunset, as she was then judged to be five miles distant. Before darkness had overspread the hemisphere, the bearings of the stranger were correctly taken, and the night being perfectly clear and cloudless, and the horizon being well defined, objects could be seen at considerable distance, especially with the aid of a night glass, and they did not fail to put this in requisition. At ten, P. M., the indefatigable gaze was rewarded by the sight of the stranger holding on her course to the eastward. As the wind had now fallen off to a moderate breeze, and the sea was smooth, it was determined by unanimous consent, to risk an action, or board her in the night, lest under its cover she might again take advantage and slip out of their hands. Every preparation therefore was made for action, and all were resolutely determined to capture this ship, if she proved to be an Englishman.

A stern chase is a long chase, and it was not until after midnight that the Cruiser was in speaking distance with Long Tom. This message had the desired effect,

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for she immediately rounded to, with her topsail to the mast. The Cruiser ranged up boldly, (her topsails and top-gallantsails being furled, and the yards braced fore and aft, so that they might not lock in with the yards of the ship,) under the lee of the vessel, which was immediately grappled. After hailing, and receiving an indistinct answer, the Commander of the Cruiser shouted

"Boarders, away!"

Again the young seaman, with his faithful friend, the boatswain, led on, followed by thirty desperate men. They were, however, much astonished to find themselves on the deck of an unarmed vessel, without encountering any opposition, and this astonishment was increased, when they learned that it was an American ship, bound, as was conjectured previously, to the south of Europe. The crew were immediately remanded on board of the Cruiser, with the exception of the second lieutenant and a few men, who were ordered to remain on board during the night, and keep within hail of the Cruiser.

It may not be amiss to state here, that during the war with England, the Peninsula or the south of Europe, was the great theatre of war, between the French and the allied armies of England, Portugal and Spain. The loss of the great resources of supplies from America, from the fact that the two powers were in collision, was severely felt, and in consequence, the British Government issued licenses to American vessels, for the purpose not only of receiving supplies of provisions, but also to protect them

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from capture by their own men-of-war. Now as this licensed trade on the part of the British was not recognized by the American Government to be lawful, all such vessels were good prizes in the event of its being ascertained that they sailed under the British license.

Now this ship was strongly suspected by the Commander of the Cruiser to be of this character, although the captain roundly affirmed that no such license was on board, and that his merchants chose to incur this great risk. In the examination of the ship's papers every thing appeared to be correct as the captain had stated, but the Commander of the Cruiser was not satisfied, and immediately instituted a diligent search for the license. After a long and most tedious investigation of some hours in every part of the ship that was comeatable, it was at length found concealed between the upper and lower parts of the anchor-stock. Every doubt, therefore, was now dispelled as to her true character, and of course she was taken possession of, manned, and ordered to the United States. The capture of this ship, the indefatigable, long chase, the daring act of boarding in the night, but especially the correct opinion of the Commander in regard to the character of the ship, and whence she was bound, all conspired to induce a respect for the opinion of the Commander, as well as to reinstate him in a great degree to the confidence of the officers and crew.

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CHAPTER XXI.

THE YOUNG SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

If a spectator could have stood on some high pinnacle, and observed the movements of the Cruiser, he would immediately have pronounced that she had no positive or certain destination, for she presented a very different appearance at this time from what she had the day previous, when she was completely dressed in a cloud of canvass, bounding over the billows like an ocean bird, or like a race-horse at his full speed, in chase of the enemy. The low canvass with which she was now dressed was scarcely sufficient to keep her steady, and prevent her from rolling to windward. The unmindful helmsman, careless of the course, while the officer of the deck was discoursing upon the events of the past day, took little notice of the craft as she fell off and came to alternately, with a sweep that would have encircled nearly half the compass.

It was a matter now of great curiosity and speculation what plan of operations the skipper would next pursue. Several rumors were afloat, one of which was that the present cruising ground did not warrant a farther delay, and that a position at the entrance of the Irish

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Channel was intended for future operations. Another rumor reported that she was forthwith to run in for the land, to the northward of the Capes of Lisbon. They were not, however, to remain long in doubt, for the morning after the events recorded in the preceding chapter, the Cruiser was kept away to make the land, and before night the southern coast of Europe was seen at the distance of twelve leagues. At sunset her head was laid off shore under easy sail.

It was one of those peculiarly bland nights, which not only invites every seaman on deck, but also conspires to banish from his thoughts, (at least for the time being,) past events, or the hardships and perils of an ocean life. The decks presented an unusual exhibition of cheerfulness, and with present feelings, the past was merged and forgotten.

"How light and buoyant are the hearts of these reckless beings," observed the young seaman to the boatswain; "the smallest excitement would immediately change this state of feeling, and then you would behold the wild propensities so often shown by them in this craft."

"Why as for the matter of that," replied the boatswain, "I've sailed in all kinds of crafts, but in all my going to sea I never was cooped up with such a set of soldiers as we have on board of this craft; and I'll tell you what, messmate, between you and I, I don't care how quick this cruise is up, for what with our skipper, and this crew, I don't think much good 'll come on't at last. But come, you hav n't finished that yarn of

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yours, and I'd just like to know how you come on with your box of diamonds; so as we've got four hours on deck, just spin out some of that yarn."

The young seaman complied with the request of the boatswain as follows:

"Every day brought with it renewed proofs of the affection of my parents, and I strove with the most anxious solicitude not only to cultivate those good feelings toward me, but also by attentions to their comfort, to banish from their minds the melancholy reflections of the past. Alas! although my father had striven to bear with fortitude the wreck of his fallen fortune, and although he exerted himself to appear cheerful and happy, yet being naturally of a delicate constitution, the blow he had received was too much, and in spite of all his endeavors at concealment, it soon became apparent that there was a worm at the root of the gourd, preying rapidly upon his vitals; the hectic flush, cough, short breath, and decaying frame, were symptoms that could not be mistaken. Week after week rolled away, and those indications of pulmonary consumption now settled into a fixed reality. The trembling frame of my father, and his great weakness, obliged him to confine himself to the bed. My dear mother seldom left his room, and I watched over him with feelings that can be more easily imagined than described. The best medical aid was procured, but the physicians soon pronounced his case to be hopeless. When their decisions were communicated to my mother, it had well nigh proved fatal; as it was, the shock took

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so deep a root, that it gradually preyed upon her constitution, and she never recovered.

"Our mansion at this time presented a scene of withering gloom, and when busy reflection stole over my mind, like a guilty culprit I stood condemned as being the author of all these woes. My father lingered for two months, retaining all his faculties, and when sufficiently strong, he conversed freely. The uniform tendency of his conversation was his perfect reconciliation to me, and resignation to his approaching death. At length nature gave way, and after a few days of intense suffering, during which I never left his bed-side, just before the hour of midnight; with a strong effort and my assistance, he was raised on the pillow, and placing his hand upon my head, he pronounced the blessing of a dying father to his only son, and immediately expired without a groan. The scene which now took place was too much for the fortitude of my mother or myself; she was carried out of the room in a situation that nearly deprived her of her senses; and even when the paroxysms of grief had subsided, a settled despondency made her almost insensible to this severe trial.

"After two days, the remains of my father were placed in his last silent retreat, and it now became necessary to watch with tender care over the declining health of my only remaining parent. Oh! my friend, when I look back upon those times, when I contemplate the latter days and settled melancholy of my mother, and the old family mansion shrouded in gloom, when reflec-

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tions of this nature stamp me as being the author of those scenes of ruin and death, my thoughts quite overpower me, although years have passed away since they took place."

"Come, come," said the boatswain, "if you keep on with this kind of a yarn much longer, my head-pumps will give way."

"You shall hear it all," observed the young seaman mournfully, "and then my poor heart will be relieved. The gloom and despondency which had gathered round my mother, brought with it a gradual decay; and although there was no disease, yet it was evident that nature could not bear up under the severe shock she had received. Why should I multiply words upon these mournful events? Know then, my friend, that three months after the death of my father, I followed the remains of my honored mother to the silent tomb. Every scene and circumstance which was presented to me, called up associations of the most painful and melancholy kind, and I resolved to settle the affairs of my father, and bid adieu for ever to the place of my nativity.

"Although I became nearly indifferent to every thing connected with the place of my birth, yet there was one object that hung about my heart, and which even my indifference could not shake off. This was no other than E——; and as parental ties were now severed, I soon found that my passion for her became stronger and more intense. I resolved, therefore, to obtain another interview, and learn from her own de-

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cision, whether she would at some future period unite her happiness and fortune with one who had rendered himself unworthy of her esteem. In a few days this meeting took place, and although I did not receive from her own lips the undisguised sentiments of love, yet the assent to my proposition was not entirely withheld. In short, she flattered my hopes with expressions of kindness, which my fond heart construed favorably. I mentioned to her my intentions of quitting W—— for ever; that the grave contained all that could bind me to the place where every spot would call forth remembrances of my past follies; adding, that on the broad theatre of the world, I would seek in a distant land some honorable employment, and not only wipe away the blot that had stained my reputation—— At this point of the conversation E—— suddenly exclaimed,

"'And are there no objects sufficiently attractive to induce you to have one lingering wish or desire to remain.'

"'Oh yes!' I replied passionately, 'but I dare not hope even for pity, much less affection; and yet were I now assured that I might hope that the sentiments of my heart were returned, even then I would tear myself away, painful as the struggle might be, until I had raised my character to the point from which it has fallen. Never, O never!' I continued, 'will I harbor the unjust thought, wish, or desire, that a fair fame and unsullied reputation should unite with the fortunes of one at whom the finger of scorn and contumely is

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pointed. Only then let me hear from your own lips, that when oceans shall roll between us, an obscure wanderer may have a place in your thoughts. I would have asked a larger boon, and yet I dare not. Tell me then ere we part, dearest E——, that you do not hate me, and this, even this, will cause my heart to beat with joy.'

"I had now disclosed not only my resolution, but also my passion for E——, when she falteringly replied that the friendship which had so long existed between us should not cease so long as so high and honorable a decision was manifested on my part. This declaration was expressed with much warmth, and placing my hand in hers without being repulsed, I ventured for the first time to place it on my heart. For a few moments not a word was spoken by either of us, but it was a silence that spoke more eloquently than the warmest words of the fondest lovers. It was a moment in which my future hopes were decided.

"'Promise me,' she passionately exclaimed, 'another interview, and take back the word *forever*, which still painfully grates on my ear.'

"My former resolutions, at this request, were immediately shaken, and I gave the promise. Three days intervened, at the expiration of which I found myself enjoying the delightful interview requested by E——; and unlike the former part of the last meeting, (which was marked with a degree of reserve and restraint,) our sentiments mutually expressed the ardor of that love which was founded on friendship and esteem. It was

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then and there that we plighted our mutual vows of constancy, for she did not solicit a change of the former part of my resolution.

"Oh! my friend, how uncertain are all things on earth. How little did I then suppose that this would be our last meeting. Oh! let me banish for ever the thought, that we shall never meet again. Yes, thou dear departed saint of virtue, pure love, and constancy, thou art happy in that bright world, where the blighting mildew of sorrow can never wither or interrupt the joys of eternal felicity. But my feelings have been quite in advance of my history."

"Aye, aye," replied the boatswain, "and my feelings, d' ye see, have got the better of my manhood, and I just find myself blubbering as if I had lost my senses. Come, come, messmate, I don't much wonder that you buy trouble ahead; for I think you've had a pretty good share of it any how, but we've got an hour yet before eight bells, so get on with your yarn, for somehow or other I want to hear the end on't."

"This meeting," continued the young seaman, "was all that the purest affection, and love, could have desired. Our separation can be more easily conceived than described. Suffice it to say, we exchanged the parting adieu. The struggle was now over, and I hastened to my lodgings, with a resolution to make all possible despatch for my departure. It did not require much time, for all my affairs were settled, and I found myself, after paying all the claims of my father's affairs, reduced to very straitened cir-

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cumstances, homeless, and about to become a wanderer without any clear destination. The next morning, I bade adieu to W——, and soon arrived at B——, one of the great seaports of our country. Here I determined to embrace the first honorable calling that presented. With these resolutions I made diligent enquiry, and for some time was baffled in my pursuit. At length, however, when every effort failed to procure employment on shore, I resolved to try my fortune on the great deep. On this theatre I hoped (from my education and a determination to excel in the profession,) soon to acquire a sufficient knowledge of seamanship and navigation, and a reputation also, that would ensure confidence, and of course would lead both to profit and honor. Very soon there was an opportunity afforded to put this resolution into practice, and I shipped before the mast on board of an East Indiaman bound to China. It will be needless, my friend, to enter into all the details connected with the duty of a green hand, or of the circumstances of the voyage. It will be sufficient to say, that I entered upon the duties of my station, with the determined ambition and perseverance of one whose only motive is to excel; and although there were many sacrifices which often mortified my pride, yet the powerful stimulus always before me, made every sacrifice a pleasure, sweetened every toil, and when danger or peril was to be surmounted, my pride and ambition prompted me on in the foremost rank. It is true that I claim no merit, for I was urged by a motive that would have roused the

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most indifferent; and unfortunately, though innocently, I became the victim of jealousy in my honest endeavors to excel, for by the time we arrived in Canton, I had acquired a pretty good knowledge of seamanship, so far as the practical duties of a ship are concerned. This, and unremitted attention to every command, obtained for me the esteem and approbation of the officers. Here too a further opportunity presented itself of attaining to that degree of seamanship which is necessary to command. The ship was here stripped to a girtline, every yard and spar was also overhauled, as well as the standing rigging. This was of great service to me, for I learned more of seamanship on this voyage, than half a dozen European voyages could have afforded me; so that when it was concluded, (although it took but twelve months for its completion,) I was considered competent to fill an officer's berth; but as yet I regarded my own deficiencies too great, and resolved to make another voyage to India before I assumed any command.

"On my return to the United States, I wrote immediately to her who had now become dear as life itself to me, and received an answer such as may be imagined and desired by those who have been placed under similar circumstances. In this letter (which I have now in my possession,) there is a repetition of that pledge of love and constancy which we mutually plighted at our last meeting. In it there are the warmest breathings of refined and virtuous affection, as well as frequent cautions that my zeal and ambition

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should not exceed the bounds of prudence and discretion; aye, and these were solicited not only for mine, but also her own happiness."

When the young seaman had reached this part of his narrative, eight bells were struck, and the watch was piped below.

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CHAPTER XXII.

THE SCOTCH PRIZE.

During the whole night the Cruiser stood off shore under easy sail, and it was confidently expected that by her proximity to the land, she would fall in with vessels bound to the westward or to the northward. At daybreak the look-outs were at their stations at the mast-head. It was one of those clear days which seldom appears on the southern coast of Europe, in the month of November. The sun rose from beneath a well defined horizon, and as it ascended into the azure vault, its bright rays reflecting on the clouds, exhibited a rich drapery in every variety of color, such as the pencilings of no human skill could imitate. The wind was light, the sea smooth, and in short, it was not only one of those mornings which are so grateful to a seaman, but also from its peculiar mildness and clearness, objects might be seen at their greatest distance by the sailor's strengthened vision. In vain, however, did the practised eye of the look-out scrutinize the whole horizon; in vain did he try to fix his intent gaze upon any definite object, for the land was now beyond the reach of his keen glance, and no sail appeared in sight to stimu-

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late and excite the keen appetites of the expectant but now disappointed officers and crew.

"Mast head, there!" bellowed out the officer of the watch, "is there nothing in sight?"

The reply was in the negative, and the officer muttered out something about having wool in his eyes, and then ordered an old quarter-master, who had served long on board of a man-of-war, to go aloft and take a thorough look-out. The old seaman went aloft, but his observation resulted with no better success, for his answer to the interrogatory of the officer was, that it was as clear as a kitten's eye, and that nothing was in sight. By this time the officers and crew were on deck, and their chagrin was so great that they swore at this rate they would all starve to death, if they kept dodging about on this cruising ground any longer.

The Cruiser was still kept with her head off shore, under easy sail, and the calculation by the intelligent sailing-master, (for it will be remembered that all his calculations were made by guessing,) was, that the land was fifty miles distant that morning, for as he affirmed that he had not worked up the log, he guessed he was pretty near right. The down-easter, although having had considerable experience in navigation, did not understand the more correct way of ascertaining a vessel's position, viz. by lunar observation, for he roundly affirmed that there were more vessels lost by these new inventions than by the old way of navigating, for the plain reason that not more than one in twenty knew any thing about them. It was true that the down-easter, so

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far from having any knowledge of lunars, did not know how to correct the sun's declension, for he invariably worked up a meridian altitude without addition or subtraction, just as it was laid down in Bowditch's Navigation. But he was always on the safe side in regard to navigation, for no one on board ever heard him assert positively the situation of the Cruiser, and the log-book, if examined, would prove the truth of this assertion.

Toward meridian the breeze freshened, and the wind hauled to the westward; dark clouds hove up in that quarter, indicating strong breezes and squally weather; it was not long after dinner before the exciting cry of 'Sail ho!" was heard from the mast-head. In a few moments all were in excitement, and when the boatswain's whistle piped all hands "make sail, a-hoy," every seaman sprang to the aid of his messmate, and the Cruiser was dressed with all the canvass she could carry upon the wind for the chase.

The stranger in question bore directly in the wind's eye, distant at least from twelve to fifteen miles. The correct bearings of the stranger were taken, and no perceptible difference or alteration was manifest in the speed of the two vessels, except that the Cruiser, holding a better wind, and laying nearer to it, gained rapidly to windward, so that by two o'clock the hull of the stranger was lifted from the deck of the Cruiser.

Every glass was now put in requisition, and serious opinions were expressed in relation to the character of their neighbor. The second lieutenant from the mast-head reported her to be a long ship with bright sides,

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very square yards, having her fore and mizen top-gallant-masts sent down, with her main top-gallant-sail set, and her main-course hauled up; and he also affirmed that she had bales of cotton slung over her quarter.

The Commander observed that she could not be an American vessel from the appearance of her canvass, and further, he observed that he did not know where a vessel could be bound, steering as she was in this latitude and longitude. The second lieutenant observed, that from her great length, square yards, &c., he thought her to be a man-of-war in disguise. This opinion was immediately rejected by the Commander, for he averred that no man-of-war could be so perfectly metamorphosed as that ship to windward.

"In my judgment," replied the first lieutenant, "before one hour passes away you will see as great a transformation in that ship, which you now look upon as a merchantman, for by that time all doubts will be solved in reference to her true character."

"I sincerely hope so," observed the Commander, "for by that time I trust we shall be in possession of a good fat prize. Nevertheless, we must be in readiness to bear away, should we be deceived."

The report from the mast-head rather corroborated the opinion of the first lieutenant, for the stranger by this time had his fore and mizen top-gallant-masts on end, the sails also were set, and the main-tack hauled aboard, and it was now clearly perceived that she fore-reached upon the Cruiser. Again and again the mast-head was hailed, and as often the report confirmed the opinion of

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the first lieutenant, as the proximity of the two vessels enabled them to see distinctly that the stranger had four reefs in her topsails, a reef in her top-gallant-sails, and that every sail was sheeted close home, and every yard swayed up taut to the mast-head.

The opinion of the Commander was now entirely shaken, and orders were given in quick succession to rig out the studding-sail booms, and to get the square-sail yard ropes bent on, ready to set the sail. Nor were these orders out of place, for by this time the two vessels were not more than a league apart, and further, the mast-head now reported that the ship was swaying up her royal-mast, and rigging out her flying jib-boom. From all these preparations very little doubt remained in reference to her true character.

The greatest anxiety now prevailed, as the distance between the two was lessening every moment, for already they were nearly within point-blank shot of each other. The crew were posted at their different stations, and every sail was ready to be set, when orders were given to bear away. The mast-head now reported in a hurried manner that the ship had kept away and was under a cloud of canvass, bearing down upon the Cruiser. Orders were now rapidly given to bear away and make sail, so that in a few minutes every yard of canvass was spread to the breeze, and every sail was trimmed with seaman-like precision, while the Cruiser bounded over the waves with the rapidity of an ocean bird. In a short time, however, it was perceptible that her antagonist was no laggard, for

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when the relative bearing of the two vessels was taken, it was evident that the frigate gained upon the Cruiser, and so confident was the enemy of his victim, that he sent messenger after messenger from his bow-chasers, which, however, fell without doing any execution. The wind now freshened, with squalls of rain, which ever and anon excluded the frigate from the sight of the Cruiser, but as often as the mist drove away to leeward, the frigate sent her compliments in the shape of a thirty two pound shot. The general impression now was that it would be impossible to get away from the frigate, for every yard of canvass was set, and she was now running at her greatest speed; the squall, too, had increased in violence, and the masts and spars, groaning under the weight of canvass, seemed to be unequal to the torture.

At this crisis a consultation was held on the quarter-deck, and the opinion of the Commander was, that the Cruiser should be hauled close by the wind, taking advantage of a squall, which would of course close her in from the view of the frigate, and thus enable her to get the weather-guage. "For it is very evident," he continued, "that we cannot keep out of his way more than three hours, and should a chance shot cripple any of our spars, why then the fate of the Cruiser will be sealed."

At this moment the mast-head reported that the land was in sight, stretching north and south as far as the eye could reach.

"Now gentlemen," resumed the Commander, "you

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perceive that we have but one alternative left us, for at the rate we are now running, the bones of this craft will shortly be lying on the beach yonder."

"In my judgment," replied the first lieutenant, "as the night is rapidly advancing, and the weather threatening, and as it indicates a strong breeze with heavy squalls during the night, it will be impossible to elude the vigilance of that frigate, so long as daylight lasts; and as the enemy cannot overhaul us in less than two hours, why then in my judgment our safest plan will be, to run on until night shuts in, and under its cover, in one of those heavy squalls we may with some security haul by the wind, take every sail in and lay under our poles until the frigate shall get to leeward."

The Commander did not entirely assent to this opinion, but as past experience convinced him, that in more than one instance his judgment and opinion had proved erroneous, he reluctantly consented that the Cruiser should still be kept before the wind.

"Well, I have just been thinking," observed the boatswain to the young seaman, "unless we have the devil's luck and our own too, that the bones of this craft will be bleaching on them rocks under the lee before midnight, or that you and I will have a snug berth in the cable tier of that frigate yonder! Why look'ee, messmate, she's coming up hand over hand, and at the rate we are now going, in less than two hours we shall hear the roar of the breakers. Now what's your opinion of it, messmate?"

"It is true," replied the young seaman, "that the

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nearness of the frigate augurs very unfavorably of our escape, and the land not being far distant, presents an appalling danger, but then if my feelings do not deceive me, this craft will be reserved for another fate."

The boatswain expressed some astonishment at this declaration, but as he had many proofs of the prophetical truth of the young seaman's decision, he subscribed to this without hesitation, averring at the same time, "that it would be little less than a miracle if the Cruiser should get safe out of two fires."

Night now began rapidly to close in, and squall after squall, with increased fury and more frequent repetition, drove the Cruiser furiously on toward the lee-shore, and when the last glimpse of the frigate was seen, she was not more than half gun shot distant. She had ceased firing, for the reason that her shot were sent at random.

The darkness had now shrouded the whole hemisphere with an impenetrable gloom, so profound that objects could not be seen twenty yards distant. The men were now ordered to lay aloft, to be in readiness to take in all light sail, every halyard fore and aft was ordered to be clear for running, and every man was at his station, while a death-like silence prevailed. The lights were all extinguished, and nothing was heard but the roar of the elements, and the dashing spray at the Cruiser's bow. The interval for the next squall was marked with the deepest anxiety; not a word was spoken forward or aft; the wind whistled through the rigging and blocks with an intonation so melancholy,

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that the superstitious seamen swore that it was ominous of the disaster that would befall them that night.

"Silence! fore and aft. Hark!"

A death-like stillness immediately prevailed.

"What noise is that I hear?" echoed the Com mander in rather a subdued tone.

In a few moments a roar like distant thunder fell upon the ear of every man on board. The sound was appalling, for the truth flashed upon every mind: it was the roar of the dashing breakers upon the rocks! No time was now to be lost. The squall which had risen in the western board came driving furiously on, sending before it a huge mass of black waters, which threatened to deluge the Cruiser with instant destruction!

"Are you ready fore and aft?"

The reply was in the affirmative.

"Hark!" again echoed the Commander.

The tolling bell from the frigate was distinctly heard. Orders were now rapidly given, and the light sails, together with the jibs and mainsail, were taken in and secured, in less time than I have taken to describe it. The helm was put to starboard, and in the same moment the heavy squall struck the Cruiser, but she was stripped for the fight, rounding to gallantly by the wind, forging ahead a least a quarter of a mile. In a few minutes the frigate came driving on, and was distinctly marked by her battle lanterns until she was far to leeward. The Cruiser's sails were now reefed down and set, and although the night was threatening, and

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the western gale blew briskly, with heavy squalls; yet the Cruiser, under a press of canvass, stood off on a wind to the westward. At daylight in the morning, nothing was seen of the enemy, and it was now determined to shift the cruising ground.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

AN ENGAGEMENT WITH A BRITISH PACKET.

The general topic of conversation on board of the Cruiser, related especially to the events recorded in the preceding chapter. It is true the Commander deserved great praise for carrying into execution the masterly manœuvre which saved the Cruiser from capture; nevertheless the greater deference and respect for the opinion of the first lieutenant was elicited from the officers and crew, for the success which had resulted from his plan of escape suggested on the previous day. It may be easily conceived, therefore, that the confidence naturally reposed in the Commander, was gradually diminished, and transferred to the first lieutenant. Subsequent to this, and during the remainder of the cruise, his judgment and opinion secured for him the most unbounded confidence and respect, and when it was ascertained that the next plan of operations would be to cruise off the chops of the Irish Channel, there was a general demur; but when the first lieutenant urged the propriety of this measure, as being the best plan to finish the cruise, not a murmur was heard from any quarter.

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After breakfast in the morning of the following day which had marked the successful escape of the Cruiser from the British frigate, orders were given to pipe all hands on deck. As soon as the crew had mustered up, the Commander, after passing a eulogium on their good conduct and bravery, addressed them as follows:

"Our cruise has been protracted, unavoidably, longer than I expected at its commencement. Nevertheless, we have no reason to complain, although we have had some hard fighting, and hard chases, and the chances of war, and other casualties of the sea, have cut off some of our shipmates. This, however, was to be expected, and considering the great hazard we have had to encounter, the ratio of deaths has been very inconsiderable to the proportion of the men composing the crew of this Cruiser. We have been on this cruising ground for a considerable length of time, and it has been owing to your intrepidity and activity, that this craft is not in the possession of the British. To remain here any longer, would be attended with great hazard, and endanger our safety, as it must be pretty well known, that we have been cruising on this ground for some time past. I have therefore determined to change our position, and cruise off the chops of the Irish Channel for a short time, and although it will be attended with much risk, yet we shall be more likely to fall in with merchant vessels, which will enable us speedily to finish this cruise. Our success, however, still depends upon your good conduct. I hope, therefore, as you have heretofore behaved gallantly, I shall have no reason in the future

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to change my opinion, and I trust we shall ultimately be rewarded for all our dangers and toils."

At the conclusion of this harangue, there was a low, buzzing murmur of disapprobation among some of the men, for they swore that but for the skipper the cruise might have been finished long ago; while the others proposed to give three cheers, which was done, yet so faintly, that it rather expressed a kind of disrespect than esteem for the judgment and opinion of the Commander. The Cruiser was now bending her course under a press of sail toward the chops of the Irish Channel, and the only thing which reconciled the crew and officers to this measure, was the probability that the cruise would soon be terminated.

"I've been thinking," observed the boatswain to the young seaman, "since the skipper gave us that bit of small talk, that he don't feel quite so easy in his mind, for he knows pretty well that this craft will have to run the gauntlet off the Channel there, and to my mind, why d' ye see, it would be much better to have run his craft down towards the West India Islands, for then we should have a little pleasant weather, and our chance would be as good to fall in with vessels, and what's more, we should be likely to keep out of the way of English men-of-war, and have a short run to Yankee land. What's your opinion of it, messmate?"

"The opinion you have advanced," replied the young seaman, "is correct, and such would have been the proper course; but there seems to me to be a strange kind of fatality hanging over this Cruiser, and although

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I have endeavored to shake off this feeling, yet in spite of all my efforts to the contrary, I cannot help thinking but that this craft is preserved for some melancholy disaster; and this opinion is founded upon the observation and experience of the past. For you are aware," he continued, "that the recklessness and impetuosity of our Commander, has not only lengthened out the cruise, but also in more than one instance the safety of the Cruiser has been jeopardized, as well as the lives of the crew; and therefore I should not be surprised, that instead of cruising off the chops, he would run this craft up Channel, and thereby finish the cruise with her capture, and our incarceration in a British prison during the war."

"Well, as I've had pretty good reason for believing your word, and besides this is about my way of thinking, why then, messmate, we'll make the best on't; but some how or other I should just like to have that first lieutenant take charge of this craft, especially now as we are about to have some hard knocks or hard chases, for to my mind he can bring this craft into action, aye, and get her out of it too, in a more seaman-like manner than our skipper, and as to the matter of judgment, why d'ye see, messmate, the skipper can't hold a candle to him."

The conversation was suddenly interrupted by a report from the mast-head, that there was a sail in sight, bearing on the starboard beam, and apparently standing to the southward. The usual interrogatories were made, to all of which an indefinite answer was returned. The second lieutenant went aloft, and in a few minutes re-

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ported confidently that the stranger was standing to the southward. The Cruiser immediately wore round, and made all sail in chase. The excitement of the previous day had scarcely subsided, when in less than twenty-four hours there was sufficient material to keep alive the exciting flame. This proved to be of great importance to the Commander, for the respect due to him as such, was declining day by day. It is true, he merited great commendation for his coolness and intrepidity on the previous day; but even this was overbalanced in the opinion of the crew, from the fact, that he only executed the judgment and opinion of the first lieutenant; he resolved, therefore, that whenever a favorable opportunity presented, to strike a blow that would at once reinstate him in the confidence and esteem of the officers and crew.

The stranger in question was at length ascertained to be a brig, and the report from the mast-head was, that she had greatly forereached, and was now bearing two points on the larboard bow. This was easily accounted for, from the fact that the Cruiser was kept nearly before the wind, while the stranger had the wind abeam, and of course every sail would draw to advantage and increase her speed. The Cruiser had now dropt in the wake of her neighbor, so that in a very short time it would be manifest which of the two had the advantage in sailing. In less than an hour every doubt was removed, for at her mast-head the topsails were raised, and scarcely had another hour passed away, before she was seen from the Cruiser's deck. Every preparation

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was now made for action, for although the stranger had not altered her course, from the time she was first discovered, yet from the tautness of her rig, her square yards, and the cut and set of her sails, all went to confirm the opinion, that she was either a sloop-of-war, or packet; consequently, they would have sufficient work, in either case.

The superior speed of the Cruiser enabled her to gain rapidly on the chase, and a close proximity of the two vessels, served to confirm the opinion already entertained of the stranger. It was a matter of some astonishment, when she was clearly distinguished with the glass, that she had no studding-sails set. This could be accounted for only on the supposition of decoy, for confident in her own strength, she used but little effort to avoid an action. Great caution and prudence were now necessary, and indeed, having been taught a severe lesson on the preceding day, the Commander was more than usually cautious, for he frequently consulted the first lieutenant as to the best plan of operations.

"From the manœuvres of that craft," observed the Commander, "and at the rate we are now overhauling her, we shall bring her to an action before sunset, and my plan would be, to lay this craft alongside, and endeavor to carry her by boarding. What is your opinion, sir," he observed to the first lieutenant.

"It is evident," he replied, "that unless she has used some stratagem to decoy us, we have the advantage of speed, and can therefore change our position.

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In my judgment, then, as our battery is small, and we have only Long Tom to depend upon, it will be better to engage him at long shot; this I believe to be the most prudent course; for should she prove to be a man-of-war, notwithstanding we have the advantage in sailing, by engaging her at close quarters, she might cripple our spars, and thus prevent the possibility of escape; and even should she turn out to be a packet, which I am inclined to believe, my plan is still more feasible, because in point of armament and men, they are nearly equal to a man-of-war, and commanded by a naval officer.

The strong sense and force of the suggestions were very apparent to the Commander and officers, and it was decided to engage the enemy on the plan proposed by the first lieutenant. It was half an hour of sunset before Long Tom was in speaking distance, at which time the Cruiser yawed, and sent her compliments to the stranger, and the stars and stripes were run up to the peak, and the enemy, (for she now displayed the bunting having St. George's cross on it,) returned the compliment in the shape of a twelve pound shot. As the antagonists were now at short point-blank shot distance of each other, the Cruiser took in sail, so as to avoid a closer proximity to the enemy. This was no sooner discovered by the Englishman than he hauled close upon a wind on the starboard tack, when she immediately furled all her light sails, hauled down the jib, and hauled up her courses. By this time the strife had fairly commenced at long shot, without much execution

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on either side. The Cruiser having, as had been suggested by the first lieutenant, the advantage in sailing, chose a position on the starboard-quarter of the enemy, and being to windward, could maintain that, or any other position she chose. A brisk fire was now kept up on both sides, which did no other damage than to cut away some of the rigging, and some of the shot passing through the sails. Thus far there was a pretty general average of loss in the rigging and sails on both sides, when the Commander's impetuosity ordered the helm to be put up, and run down, so as to engage the enemy at close quarters.

Night was coming on, and from the manner in which the brig was brought into action, and the determined resistance and courage which had already been manifested, it was very evident, that she was strongly manned and armed, and that it would not be so easy a matter to capture her as it was at first contemplated. As soon as the Cruiser had approached to within half gunshot, a sheet of flame issued from the whole broadside of the enemy. This was a severe check to the Cruiser, for it cut away her midship bulwarks, and fore gaff, wounding several of the crew, but Long Tom amply repaid this unwelcome salutation, by cutting away the jib-boom and starboard night-head of the enemy. Darkness was now rapidly approaching, and a heavy fire was kept up on both sides; the Englishmen fought like bloodhounds, and with so much impetuosity and courage, that the Cruiser was severely handled, her rigging, spars, and sails being so much cut to pieces

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that it became necessary to haul off and repair damages. The strife, however, was not yet over, for the Commander of the Cruiser signified his intention to the first lieutenant, that he would board the enemy. This intention was immediately made known to the crew, and the Cruiser was kept away, and run down, receiving at the same time the heavy fire of the Englishmen with tremendous effect; nor was Long Tom slow to speak for himself, for he dealt out death and destruction whenever his voice was heard. The conflict now was terrific and bloody, the Englishman working and fighting his craft at the same time, with so much courage and in such a seaman-like manner, that three attempts by the Cruiser to board was as repeatedly repulsed, and so desperate was this combat on both sides, during the subsequent half hour, that many lay wounded on the deck of the Cruiser, and it was supposed that the carnage on board of the enemy was equally as great, as the close proximity of the two exhibited much less in the Englishman's spars, rigging, and sails; indeed each of them fought with such desperation, that before an hour rolled away, they were glad to haul off from each other and repair damages.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

ARRIVAL AT THE CRUISING GROUND

During the preceding night, the watch was employed as far as practicable, in repairing the severe damages which the Cruiser sustained, in the awful conflict with the supposed British packet, and so great were the damages, that many of the sails were unfit for service, consequently they were replaced by others; in short, four days were necessary to reinstate the Cruiser's condition, as it had been previously to the action, and it was a matter of surprise, that considering the desperation in which this terrific action was fought, there were none killed on board the Cruiser, although many were wounded, among whom was one of our heroes, the intrepid boatswain.

The crew, in consequence of this action, became much weakened, and it was necessary not to be hasty in approaching the contemplated cruising ground, but rather afford the wounded a sufficient opportunity that they might recover strength, and be in a fit condition for actual service when those services were required. The wound which the boatswain had received was neither mortal nor very severe, being occasioned by a

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splinter, which had struck him, making a large contusion on the thigh. The young seaman had now an opportunity not only of showing his gratitude, but also of returning the favors he himself had received from the boatswain, when the former was in a similar condition. He was therefore unremitting in attention to his friend, beguiling many tedious hours of confinement, which would otherwise have been almost past endurance. As the young seaman was aware, that the hour of sickness and confinement was peculiarly applicable to make an impression with serious conversation, he took occasion to enlarge on the subject of man's duty toward the Supreme Being, in order to get a regular set of papers and a clean passport for a happy admission into the other world. "Every hour," observed the young seaman to his friend, "brings with it renewed obligations on our part, from him whom we derive every blessing that we enjoy, and I have often thought," he continued, "if we appreciated those blessings as we should, they would not only inspire our hearts with gratitude, but stimulate us also, to devote our lives and services to that Being from whom alone we derive consolation and support here, and eternal happiness in the world to come."

"Well, well," replied the boatswain, "I'm glad you've got on that tack, so now, messmate, as we was chatting on that before we had the dust with the Englishmen, suppose you overhaul your knowledge box, and just tell me how to get that good Pilot on board."

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The young seaman, with all seriousness, complied as follows:

"It is a source of great pleasure to me, my friend," he observed, "that I can in any way relieve your hours of pain and confinement, and if I know my own heart, there is no one in this world for whom I would more willingly and cheerfully exert my utmost endeavors. This world to me," he continued mournfully, "would be a mere blank, unless I had one in whom I could repose all my sorrows. For such a one I long sought in vain, until an all-wise Providence brought us together — pardon me, my friend, for this digression — well then," he continued, "to secure the favor as well as the assistance of this Pilot on board of your vessel, you must attend strictly to his written instructions."

"What are they?" enquired the boatswain.

"First, you are to relinquish every evil practice, and especially those to which sailors are so much accustomed. I do not say that you are in the habit of committing many transgressions and sins, but then you will soon discover by reading those instructions, that there is one clause which reads thus, 'He that offendeth in one, is guilty of all;' that is, you can never get this good Pilot on board, so long as you voluntarily disobey the least part of these instructions. But again, after there is a full obedience to this part of the instructions, then you must heave in stays, and get on the other tack, for as you have been on the wrong course all your life, and could never receive the favor or service of the Pilot

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on that tack, so now you must get on the true course, where you will be sure not only to fall in with this good Pilot, but he will then most cheerfully come on board, by your request and permission."

"Well," interrupted the boatswain hastily, "I don't exactly understand, although I've been boxing the compass for many years, and can work a ship, in all kinds of weather, and under any sail, yet I say, messmate, I don't exactly know how to get this old hulk of mine about on the other tack."

"Why as to that," replied the young seaman, "this knowledge is only to be obtained by the written instructions."

"Aye, aye," answered the boatswain, "but then what's a chap to do that can't read a word in the book? tell me that, messmate."

"I will inform you according to the best of my knowledge in these matters," replied the young seaman, "what I mean by your having steered the wrong course all your life, and getting on the other tack, is this: you and I have been committing sin, and have lived all our days in open violation of the commandments of God; this is the wrong course. Now what I mean by heaving in stays, is, to be sorry for having pursued this course, and then by sincere and unfeigned repentance, to fill away on the other tack. Again, what I mean by steering on the true and the right course is, by making prayer to God, and an implicit reliance upon the ability and willingness of this good Pilot to save your old weather-beaten hulk, and bring her safely into port.

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Then, and not until then, will this Pilot take possession of your ship, and so long as you keep him on board you are safe. Aye, although there are sunken rocks, shoals, and quicksands, and although there may be storms, and the foaming billows may sometimes dash their crested tops over your bark, and although the thunders may roll, and the lightnings flash, nevertheless, if you keep this Pilot on board, attend to his orders, and keep a good look-out ahead by faith and prayer, he will get your weather-beaten bark safely into the port of eternal rest."

At this point of the conversation, the boatswain passionately grasped the hand of the young seaman, and exclaimed:

"But for you, messmate, I should long ago been stranded on the sunken rocks, and this hulk would have been carried down by the whirlpool, into which so many poor sailors are lost; but while you was marking off the course, messmate, I boused my thinking tacks aboard, and says I to myself, what shall I do when I get on shore? how shall I sheer off from all these matters that draw sailors away to destruction?"

"The best course to pursue," replied the young seaman, "is to steer clear of all those haunts of dissipation which allure seamen, and the first of those that I would name, are those resorts which drown the sensibilities by partaking of the intoxicating bowl, which reduces the man to a level with the brute. In short, it is this which leads to every species of dissipation and folly which marks the general conduct of seamen

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when on shore; it is this that makes him shunned by all respectable society, and looked upon as a kind of outcast, and draws the line which divides the sailor and landsman. It is not," he continued, "the dress, sea technicalities, or manners, as some have vainly supposed, that causes this distinction. If seamen would conduct themselves as other men, they would be equally respected, nay, I believe more, for a little reflection will convince every man that they are a most useful class of society."

"It is very true," answered the boatswain, "but then do you think Jack is to blame for all his bad conduct when on shore?"

"Why as to that," replied the young seaman, "there may be some palliation; for when it is taken into consideration how many privations they are obliged to endure, such as almost a total absence of domestic comforts, as well as the intercourse with society, and then to look at his peculiar mode of life when at sea, often compelled to live on the hardest fare, and at the same time to the treatment which he endures, to which no landsman would submit, when all this is taken into consideration, it is no wonder that sailors are compared to wild animals when they are on shore, especially when there are numbers who are always on the watch to decoy them, and by seeming acts of friendship entice him to quaff the intoxicating bowl, and then strip his pockets of his hard earnings; and it is certainly true that landsmen will have much to answer for in this respect."

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"I believe," replied the boatswain "that sailors are not quite so bad as they were when I first went to sea."

"It is owing principally, if not entirely," observed the young seaman, "to the great efforts exerted by religious and philanthropic men for their reformation."

"Well, well," answered the boatswain, "I'm glad that poor Jack has not all the blame to carry off on his shoulders; and I'll tell you what, messmate, it is a long time since I've had a bit of small talk like this, and if every sailor had a good messmate, just to put him in the right way, as you've done to me, why then d'ye see, we should'nt have so much drinking, and frolicking, and fighting among us blue jackets."

"There is no want of instruction, if seamen will receive it; for in all our seaports there are men who are appointed for that especial purpose, viz. to distribute Bibles, tracts, and other good books, and impart such advice, to which if seamen will only adhere and follow, as will make them better men, and what is infinitely more important, it will make them wise unto salvation."

This grave and serious conversation made a deep impression on the boatswain, so that during his confinement, which was not of long duration, he frequently interrogated the young seaman, in regard to these, and other subjects of a similar nature.

While the two friends were happy in the society of each other, their time passing not only pleasantly but profitably together, it was not so in the ward-room, or among the crew, for the events which have been recorded resulting in such an unfavorable issue, caused a

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general dissatisfaction, especially the unlucky movement of the Commander during the action, (in opposition to the judgment of the first lieutenant,) which had enabled the enemy to make her escape, and which had proved so disastrous to the Cruiser; all these fell heavily upon the Commander, who now, in the judgment of all on board, was not only instrumental in their disasters, and in prolonging the cruise, but it was universally believed that, by his mad acts, he would run them into further difficulty.

"I wish I were well out of this craft," said an old prize-master, who had been retained on board, fearing if he were put on board of a prize, his old habits would return, and thus jeopardize the safety of the vessel, and the liberty of the prize-crew.

"For the matter of that," replied the Down Easter, "I don't think it will be long before you will have your wish accomplished, and I don't much care myself, for I don't think there is much fun in scampering away like a race-horse, and that too, with rocks and breakers a-head, and John Bull close under your stern, throwing his shot like peppercorns; no, no; I don't see the use of dodging about here, first running, then fighting, and getting cut all to pieces when there's no prize-money in the way."

"Yes, yes," ejaculated the prize-master, "we shall have a few more chases and hard knocks, through the rashness of the skipper, and then we shall spend some time on shore, in a British prison."

"That would not be quite as acceptable to my mind,"

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replied the Down Easter, "and although I can't say I like dodging about in this craft, yet I should greatly prefer a birth in this ward-room, to being locked up in the narrow compass of the prison and prison yard."

"If I'm any judge of men," observed the prize-master, "this mad-cap skipper of ours will make a bold dash up the Channel, and I should 'nt wonder if he declared the whole British coast in a state of blockade."

"As to that," replied the Down Easter, "it will not be of so much consequence if he does not madly rush into danger, without a probability of escape; but at all events, it is more than likely that you would be on board of some prize, as there are but two of you left."

How long this interesting conversation might have lasted is not exactly known, but it was suddenly interrupted by a report from the mast head that a sail was in sight.

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CHAPTER XXV.

CHOPS OF THE CHANNEL, FOG, ETC.

THE events of the last week having terminated so unfavorably, especially the action with the British Packet, wrought an entire change in the temperament and actions of the Commander. The impetuosity and rashness, which had marked his course during the former part of the cruise, entirely forsook him, and the opposite extreme of indecision and apathetic indifference took its place. The fact of a sail being in sight, which, in any former part of the cruise, would have roused him to the highest pitch of excitement, was now nearly disregarded, so much so that he scarcely exhibited sufficient interest to look at her with the glass. There were several causes which might have produced this alteration; first, he well knew that his own rashness had not only blasted the prospects of a brilliant cruise, and his false judgment in many instances jeopardized the lives of the crew, but his ambition also received a deep cut, for that respect which was due to him as the Commander, was now transferred to the first lieutenant.

Disappointment and chagrin had also brought on a

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state of despondency among the officers and crew. No interest, no speculation, no excitement was seen or appeared to be felt by them, although, like the Commander, they would have been all excitement under the same circumstances previous to this period. With the exception of the first lieutenant's, not a glass was in requisition. He alone, among the officers and crew, maintained a high and manly bearing, coolness, and intrepidity, a sound judgment, and the most perfect equanimity, which no reverse of fortune, or change of circumstances, or peril, or danger could shake, or alter for a moment his steady and unwavering purpose. He descended into the captain's cabin, where he found him sitting with his elbow on the table, and his head reclined on his hand, as if he were in a deep reverie.

"Is it your intention, sir," inquired the lieutenant, "to look after the stranger? She is plainly visible, and her courses are already raised from the deck; she is close hauled, standing on the starboard tack, and I judge from the appearance of her canvass, square yards, and taut rig, that she is a British frigate."

The last word was scarcely finished when the Commander roused from his seat, his eyes flashing, when he immediately sprang on deck, and seizing a spy-glass, he fixed a long and searching gaze at the stranger, at the same time repeatedly hailing the look-out aloft. The result of this inspection corroborated the opinion of the first lieutenant, for he quickly observed,

"I believe she is a man-of-war; however, we shall know by and by, for when she gets in our wake, if my

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opinion is correct, she will tack after us, and give us chase."

The hands were now turned up, and every preparation was made to dress the Cruiser with all the canvass that could be set close-hauled. In less than half an hour the stranger had ranged up into the wake, and there was no mistake at this time in the opinion of the Commander, for the look-out reported that the ship astern was now in stays. The distance between the two vessels was judged to be two and a half leagues. Every yard of canvass was spread that could be set to advantage upon a wind, and very shortly the speed of the Cruiser was greatly increased. The chase was kept up during the remainder of the day, and there was no perceptible gain on either side. Night closed in, and of course with it the chase was lost sight of. During the whole night, a heavy press of sail was carried on, and toward morning, the wind hauled to the S. W., with thick cloudy weather, and at daylight the ship was out of sight.

The wounded men were now recovering rapidly; some of them were already convalescent, and the boatswain, whose wound was slight, once more resumed his station on deck for actual service. The crew, however, were yet in a weakened condition, consequently there was but little disposition manifested to push the Cruiser on to her intended destination.

The state of things which now existed was truly deplorable. Indecision on the part of the Commander, and the despondency of the crew, rendered the Cruiser,

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at this time, unfit for any rencontre with the enemy, and indeed, it would have been infinitely better to have shaped a course for the United States, and made an end of the cruise, than to have run into peril and danger, in the present state of the Cruiser and her crew. No definite action, however, was taken either way, and the Cruiser was suffered to jog on her course, without any apparent decision in regard to her next operations.

Day after day passed away, and nothing transpired to change or alter the state of feeling, or to rouse the crew from the dull monotony which had gathered over them. At length, however, the lead being cast, and soundings struck in the Chops of the Irish Channel, it produced an excitement, from the fact that every moment they were in constant expectation of falling in with men-of-war, as well as merchant vessels; it was also the season for heavy mists and fogs, which are so prevalent on the British coast. This was an additional danger, which could not be controlled by human prudence or foresight, and therefore rendered the situation of the Cruiser more perilous than she otherwise could have been. This combination, however, produced a happy change among the officers and crew, for the salvation of the Cruiser, and the ultimate and speedy conclusion of the cruise, as well as their own freedom and liberty, now depended on their good conduct and bravery; they were well convinced of this, and it had the effect of producing a reaction upon all their subsequent movements. The manly bearing of the first lieutenant, his evenness of mind, which no circumstance elated or depressed, had

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also inspired the Commander at least with a degree of the same feeling. Thus, then, we have endeavored to describe the condition of the Cruiser and her crew on her arrival at the cruising ground.

It was after one of those long nights in the month of December, nearly in the parallel of 50 deg. north, the wind blowing at the same time from the south-west, that the crew, when daylight broke, were almost transfixed to the deck with a sight so appalling that it made the stoutest hearts to quail. The whole hemisphere in that region from whence the wind came, appeared like a moving mass, as if the whole Island of Britain had its foundation unloosed, and was driven along by the wind. As the morning light advanced, and the south-west wind increased, it had the appearance of a terrific white squall, driving furiously toward the Cruiser. In advance of this apparent phenomena, there appeared to be a huge mass of black water, piled in heaps, and from its immense height and apparent velocity, threatened to engulph the Cruiser in immediate destruction. She was instantaneously stripped of every yard of canvass, and made ready for the awful conflict, which was every moment expected to ensue. After a few moments of suspense, in which neither the Isle of the Ocean, nor the white squall came into collision with the Cruiser, the truth of this marvellous appearance flashed upon every mind, for it was nothing more nor less than a dense mist which had risen in the distant seaboard, and which had shrouded the whole of that quarter in obscurity, and had assumed the appearances which had so terrified and

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affrighted the crew. The sea of fog that lay above the watery sea, was about seventy feet in height, and seemed to be moving towards the Cruiser, before the south-westerly wind, which wafted the vessel on. Its surface, as viewed from the deck, was undulating and restless, like the billowy ocean, now curling upward in fantastic wreaths like smoke, now tossing and eddying in feathery streamers, as the fickle wind sported with it at its will. Sometimes masses of the misty vapor would heave themselves into the air above the general surface, in cloudy pinnacles, till the breeze would break and scatter them, dissolving in air as they flew. In a short time, as the Cruiser was under easy sail, the whole mass moved along with the breeze, and presently she was enveloped in a dense and impenetrable fog.

This was a more fearful situation, than a hard chase, or severe action, from the fact that there could be no means of escape, in the event of falling in with an enemy of superior force, and the dense mist would also prevent the possibility of making any captures, unless mere chance would throw them into collision or contact. There was, however, from the height of the fog, a possibility to get sight of the mast-head of any taut-rigged vessel that might not be too far distant. Again, there was a bare possibility to discover a sail, if the sight was fixed near the surface of the water, for it will be recollected by all those who have knowledge and experience in these matters, that there is a short space between the surface of the water and the lower edges of a dense fog. These, then, were all the chances at present for

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the discovery of vessels, upon which the safety of the Cruiser measurably depended; and these were improved to the best advantage, for it became a matter of great uncertainty, as the wind had died away, when this thick fog would be dispelled.

"I believe," observed the Commander to the first lieutenant, "that these fogs sometimes last for days, especially when the wind is light at S. W., as is the case at present. The fogs on the British coast are frequent, and sometimes of long duration, and are often very disastrous to vessels in the Channels, and it often becomes necessary to keep up a constant firing of cannon, or tolling of the ship's bells, in order to avoid collision with vessels on opposite courses or different tacks."

"The perils of war, however," replied the first lieutenant, "prevent us from taking advantage of this method, for it would endanger our safety yet more than it is at present, so that in my judgment the most profound silence should be maintained (during the prevalence of this mist,) not only among the crew, but I should think that every block, spar, yard, with all the rigging, should be secured and put in such a manner, that the least possible noise might be heard from them. This I would recommend as a matter of security, for I have often been in a light wind, and the fog so dense, that it was impossible to discover any object one yard ahead of the vessel, and at the same time I have heard the creaking of blocks, or spars, or the flapping of canvass, when the vessel has been at least three or four hundred yards distant."

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"It is very true," observed the Commander, "I like your suggestion, and we will endeavor to use every precaution, so let all the sails be lowered and stopped, as well as the other means applied to prevent noise and surprise."

It was not long before the first lieutenant, by his promptness in having the orders of the Commander executed, had the Cruiser as noiseless as an albatross that floats on the top of a mountain billow, sleeping with its head under the wing.

These preparations were scarcely finished, when the look-out from the top-gallant-yard reported that the mast-heads of a vessel were in sight on the larboard quarter. This was all that could be ascertained, but as it was a leading breeze to that point where the strange sail was discovered, it was determined to proceed with great caution, and if possible ascertain her character. Although this movement would be attended with some hazard, yet as there was now a unity of feeling and action among the officers and crew, and as the Cruiser had decidedly the advantage of being undiscovered, and again, as they were all deeply anxious to bring this protracted cruise to a termination, they resolved to run the hazard. As the head of the Cruiser was put in the direction of the strange sail, of course the deepest anxiety prevailed, and she proceeded with a silence so profound, that if she had been fallen in with during the night, she might well have been taken for a haunted vessel. Even the reports from the mast-head were conveyed in silence by a second person, who alternately went up and down.

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It was very soon reported that the dense fog had risen, and that the mast-heads of the stranger were no longer to be seen. A long and scrutinizing gaze was now made from the boat, (which had been hoisted out for that purpose,) near the surface of the water, but in vain; no trace of the stranger was seen from below, or aloft. The Cruiser held on her course in the direction that the stranger was first seen, for nearly two hours, when it was judged, that unless she was steering the same course, she must by this time be up with her, or had run past her.

"In my opinion," observed the Commander to the first lieutenant, "we had better take in sail, for it is perfectly useless to dodge about in this way on wild goose chase."

"Hist, silence! what noise is that I hear?" said the first lieutenant in a hurried tone.

The next minute there was death-like silence, and the creaking of blocks, and a noise as if from the flapping of sails, was distinctly heard on the larboard beam. From the distinctness and clearness with which these sounds were heard, the strange sail could not be more than two or three hundred yards distant. From the proximity of the two, the greatest precaution was necessary. To close with the stranger without having some knowledge of her, would be madness, and to remain stationary, would (if the fog continued,) preclude the possibility of ascertaining whether the strange sail was a man-of-war or not. They were, however, not long in suspense, for the look-out at the surface of the water

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reported that he could see the lower part of the hull of a vessel of great length, and that her head was to the eastward.

"The stranger has seen us, I believe," observed the Commander, "for it is evident from his bearings, that she could not be in that position with her head to the eastward, if she had been steering that course from the time we first saw her, and should this fog suddenly clear away, and my conjectures are right, without doubt she is a man-of-war,—I say then, if this fog should clear away, our capture would be inevitable."

The boat was hoisted in as noiselessly as possible, all sail was then set, and the Cruiser's head was put to the westward. At sunset the fog had cleared away, so that the whole eastern hemisphere presented a clear blue expanse of waters, and a well-defined horizon, with a sail far away in the distant eastern board.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

THE YOUNG SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

If the day had been obscured by the dense gloom of an impenetrable fog, the night, as if to return good for evil, was entirely the reverse: the moon rose in majestic splendor, scattering her golden rays, and tinging the clouds, which when reflected on the deep blue sea, presented to a fervid imagination a thousand beautiful images, that might have been personified into real life. As she ascended into the azure vault, the clouds which had been beautified by her rays, now disappeared, and the twinkling stars, as if ashamed of their diminutive light, receded before the broad blaze of the nightly luminary, leaving here and there only a bright planet, or star of the first magnitude. As she sailed along high in the heavens, the brightness of her light, which had partially obscured the distant horizon, was so universally diffused around the hemisphere, that an unobscured and well-defined horizon might be seen wherever the sky seemed to meet and kiss the fathomless deep. Her shining light falling on the broad expanse, shadowed forth a long line of intense brightness, and the rippling sea, as it rose from the agitation of the

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wind, ever and anon sent forth innumerable sparkling gems, which might be traced far away in the distant seaboard. The western breeze blew gently, and the Cruiser being under short sail, was slowly impelled, with a noiselessness so profound, that not even the breaking of the water at her bows was heard.

The high excitement of the day had now produced a severe reaction, and the officers and crew, as if by common consent, had (except a few of the watch, the Commander, helmsman, and officer of the deck,) fallen into a sound sleep; naught was heard except the flapping of the low sail as she rolled to windward, or the creaking of the yards; and a contemplative mind, in a scene like this, might have subsisted on its sublimity for hours.

"How different is this scene," observed the young seaman to the boatswain, as they were walking the main-deck together, "to that of the day which is now past. How often have I, in such a night as this, when the gallant ship has been impelled through the water by the steady trade wind; how often, in pacing the deck during my watch, has my mind dwelt with rapture on future scenes of happiness, which, alas! had their only existence in my poor heart, and were never, never destined to have a brighter reality. Ah! my friend," he continued, "our day dreams and night visions of happiness have their greatest enjoyment in the anticipation; for behold, how few realize what they have in prospect, and when the chances of reality accumulate, and hope's expectations are wrought to the highest point, at the

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moment, when we are just about to seize the prize, it eludes our grasp, and vanishes away, leaving not a wreck behind. Now I would not disturb your feelings, that have been induced by the calm serenity of this night, yet, my friend, the day past, which has been shrouded in gloom and obscurity, together with the dangers we have escaped, was more congenial to my feelings, than this night which is marked with so much beauty and magnificence. I know not how it is, but as this cruise winds along to its termination, thoughts crowd over my mind, of a dark and foreboding nature. It is true we have made many narrow escapes, and you and I have neither lost life nor limb; yet mark the condition of this Cruiser and her crew, weakened as she is in her complement of men, and even those who are now on board, not capable of actual service. Mark again, the alteration in the temper of our Commander, and then you will agree with me that we are not in a fit condition to remain on this cruising ground, and further, if my judgment does not deceive me, such is the peculiar state of the skipper, that it would not cost him many hours of sorrow, if this craft fell into the hands of the British. I do not mean that he would not gallantly defend her, so far as his courage is concerned, yet if she is captured by a superior force, mark what I now say: the stars and stripes will not be hauled down, until this craft is literally cut to pieces."

"Well, well," replied the boatswain, "I don't think you're the chap to flinch, but I don't see that there's any fun in fighting a frigate or a line-of-battle ship, if

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we get under their shooting irons, nor do I see any use in nailing the colors to the mast-head, to be shot at like a parcel of dogs, when the fortune of war chanced to throw us in the power of the enemy. I'll tell you what, messmate," he continued, "this craft has been poorly managed, and I begin to think like yourself, that it'll wind up at last with some rash act, that will put her in the possession of the British, and you and I (if we don't lose the number of our mess,) will have a place where the dogs won't bark at us. I've been thinking," he continued, "that this cruise will soon come to an end one way or the other, and now, messmate, if we should be taken, why d'ye see, we may be parted for a long time, or perhaps we may never meet again. Now if it should please God that I should slip my moorings first, why then all that I've got in this world, (and that's not much, excepting my prize-money in this craft, and a few shiners in the Savings' Bank in York,) I say all I've got is yours. Only just give me your word, that if I'm popped off the hooks by a chance shot from the enemy, your own hands will lash the hammock that contains my mortal body, and you will see me decently buried in the blue ocean. Promise me this, and then your old messmate, whenever the order comes, I trust will be ready to heave up his anchor, and make sail for the good port. I'll tell you what, messmate, since we had that bit of small talk the other day, I've been overhauling my reck'nings, and it just puts me in mind of what old marm used to say, when I'd slip home after a long cruise at sea; but then

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I was a wild, rattlebrain, harum scarum kind of a chap, and didn't much care about such things; but, messmate, since I've been in your company, and tracked your course all along, and see that you're not the chap to flinch when danger comes, or dodge at a shot, or hang back when the boarders are called, I say I've looked at all these matters, at the same time you don't drink grog, nor rip out oaths, and you're good and kind to all hands, obedient to every order, and respected by every man fore and aft. I say, thinks I to myself, I'll just try to get on the same tack, and steer the same course, with my messmate, so as to get the good Pilot on board."

The young seaman grasped the hand of his friend passionately, exclaiming:

"Nature has made you my superior. I would now in return get the same promise from you, should it please God to call me away first, that your own hand should pay the last sad office to my mortal remains, whether on the ocean or on the land; and to you, my friend, do I give most cheerfully all that I have in this world; nay, it belongs to you and more, even my life itself, for you have saved it more than once at the risk of your own."

The two friends were now so completely overpowered by their emotions, that they remained for some time in deep silence, until the boatswain broke the spell, by inquiring of the young seaman when he would finish his yarn.

"As we have yet two hours on deck," he replied,

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"and perhaps shall never have a better opportunity, and as my feelings are suited to its melancholy conclusion, I will endeavor to proceed.

"Again I embarked on a second voyage to the East Indies, and such was my application to obtain a thorough knowledge of seamanship and navigation, that at the expiration of the passage, I felt that I was competent to discharge the duty of an officer, and determined not to hesitate, if an offer were made. It was not long before an opportunity presented, for the second officer's berth on board of our ship; for the person who had filled that station on the passage, was discharged for disobedience of orders, and drunkenness. It is true, it was rather an unpleasant matter to sustain this relation, with the same crew, and on board of the same ship, in which I had been before the mast; for you know, messmate, that a second officer is something between an officer and seaman in a merchant ship, and is also a kind of servant for both sides. I accepted the berth, however, and although there were many jeerings, such as, 'our second dickey,' and 'you won't speak to a chap, now you've got a handle to your name;' these, and many other strokes of sailor's wit, were thrown at me, all of which I regarded not, but persevered diligently in the discharge of my duty, during the remainder of the voyage, at the conclusion of which I had the satisfaction of not only meeting with the approbation of my superiors, but was also offered a chief mate's berth in an Indiaman belonging to the same employ.

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"After our arrival I lost no time in writing to her who now held my future destiny. Our correspondence was marked with the purest strains of virtuous love. Often when I received her letters, and after perusing the warm breathings of a heart so devoted, and so constant to one that was every way unworthy of her love, I resolved to break my promise and see her again, and throw myself in the embraces of her who was now more than all the world or even life itself to me; but then reflection taught me, if I sacrificed my honor to this passion, she would then have cause to withdraw her confidence, which would be worse than death. My mind was so entirely engrossed, and the ardor of my affection so strong, that I was compelled to fly from myself, and seek in the gayety and bustle of the city other objects on which the current of my thoughts and reflections might change their course. With this determination I sallied forth, without any definite end in view, until I found myself walking at a rapid pace, down a narrow street which led to the more frequented and gayer scenes of the city. When I had nearly reached the end of this street, I encountered a man who was walking in the opposite direction. The moment we came in contact, I raised my eyes, fixing them on the person before me, and suddenly starting back, recognized the infamous wretch who had been the author of all my woes. He spoke not a word, yet he cast upon me a look of the proudest disdain and triumph. 'You are a villain!' I pronounced in an audible voice. His dark countenance changed into a savage ferocity, and

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his eyes flashed the fire of rage, yet not a word escaped his lips, and he passed on.

"With hurried steps I regained my lodgings, scarcely knowing what step to pursue, for this encounter had called up all the melancholy associations of my past life. I had once more met the author of my ruin, the ruin of my father's house, and one who had been instrumentally the cause of hurrying my honored parents to the grave. Yes, I had encountered the man who, under the garb of friendship, robbed me of my fortune, reputation, and honor, and but for him I should have been in the possession of all that could render life happy; and to make up the catalogue of woes, he too was the cause of banishment from my home, and sent me forth as a wanderer, to acquire a reputation which had been wrested from me by his repeated acts of villany and fraud. These associations, one after another, crowded upon my mind, and so entirely occupied my thoughts and feelings, that madness and revenge got the complete ascendency, and my uncurbed and unbridled passion, being wrought up nearly to phrenzy, I swore in that moment to have redress for all my wrongs. I neither saw nor heard from the detestable villain the whole of the day, during which a thousand plans were suggested by my bewildered brain, to execute that deep revenge which had now gotten entire possession of me. Sometimes I determined to call him out, and settle the affair, in the way the world falsely denominates honor; that is, by exchanging shots with pistols at the distance of ten paces. Again, I determined to reek my ven

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geance by giving him a severe castigation with a horse-whip in some public place. These thoughts occupied my mind until a late hour at night, and I still found myself without any fixed purpose of action. Nearly bewildered in mind, and all the bad passions working upon wild and heated imagination, my brain whirled, and I threw myself on the bed, to seek that repose which my tumultuous passions had so greatly disturbed.

"Broken slumbers soon took possession of my frame. I dreamed that the gamester and myself had a meeting, and that we had exchanged three shots, mine having taken effect the second time, as the ball passed through his heart, and he instantly expired. This awful dream of my slumbers continued to harass my mind almost beyond endurance, for I dreamed that I looked upon his blood, his wound and ghastly remains, with a malicious pleasure that completely satiated my revenge. Then again, as if the mighty phantom sought to harrow up my soul, I dreamed that I was a murderer, that I was guilty in the sight of a just and holy Being, that I had offended against the law, that I must now seek refuge from its penalty, and become an outcast in society. Then, as if to cap the climax, I dreamed of E— —, her constancy and love remained unshaken, until she received the dreadful intelligence of my rencontre with the gamester, which fell upon her ear and her heart as the death-knell of those in whom all our hopes of happiness centre in this world. The voice, look, and figure of her, who now lay prostrate in a swoon at the receipt of this intelligence, all, all were

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before me in my slumbering imagination. It was too much. I started from my couch, and when I was entirely conscious of being awake, the subject of my visions floated across my brain, as matters of real existence. With hurried steps I paced my chamber, and it was long ere my disturbed imagination was sufficiently composed to recognize that the dreams of the past few hours had no existence except in the slumbering phantoms of the brain.

"At ten o'clock the following morning, I was startled by a rap at my door. The servant entered, and announced that a gentleman was in waiting to see me on particular business. I immediately descended into the parlor, and beheld an exceedingly well-dressed, gentlemanly looking man, who politely accosted me, and after the customary morning salutation, handed me a note, the seal of which I broke, and read as follows:

"'Sir:—On a former occasion, I received a gross insult from you, which my pity for your youth induced me to overlook at the time, but you have seen proper to add insult to injury upon an unoffending man, and as I can no longer brook this contumely, I request that you will meet me on ———, and at ——, to settle this affair, with such weapons as the laws of honor dictate. The bearer, Mr. S——, who is my friend, will make all the requisite arrangements for this meeting. Signed H——.'"

At this moment, the watch being relieved, the two friends separated for the night.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION OF THE WEST INDIA AND MEDITERRANEAN FLEET OF MERCHANTMEN.

As the termination of this cruise depended for its success, on the prudence, management, and good judgment of him who had the control of it, and as the temperament of that person had undergone a manifest alteration, and as he was not blind in regard to the importance of the first lieutenant's judgment and opinion, so now upon all occasions, he endeavored to obtain those opinions before he would act in any matter of great importance. In short, his general deportment, stability, equanimity, and unwavering courage, had secured for him the esteem and confidence, not only of his brother officers and the crew, but also of the Commander.

The terms of intimacy which now existed between the first lieutenant and the Commander, had a very salutary influence upon the officers and crew; but it was feared among the more sagacious that this compliance on the part of the skipper was only a feint, to call back or secure once more that confidence and respect which was transferred to the first lieutenant, and that it was only

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requisite to present some circumstance or temptation before him, in order to rouse into action that impetuosity and rashness which had marked his conduct previously, and had proved so detrimental to the interest of the cruise. Be this as it may, there was at present an air of good feeling existing throughout the Cruiser, so much so, that no action of importance was executed without a general consultation with all the officers. Even the ward room, which had, for a long time, been the scene of discontent and dissatisfaction, now assumed a cheerfulness that was quite unusual to its inmates.

"I begin to think," said the old prize-master, "that we shall make a good cruise of it, and come off with flying colors, after all."

"Well," returned the other, "it won't be in a fog, any how, nor it won't be dodging about here, for in my way of thinking, every craft we see about these parts will be a man-of-war; so, then, if we make a good cruise according to your notion, we'll have to get another cruising ground."

"Why I don't know," replied the prize-master, "but that you're half right; but what do you think of shoving this craft a little further up the Channel?"

"And what do you think," returned the Down Easter, "of a snug berth in a British prison? I think we are just near enough to that Island, and as I never had much liking for an Englishman, and particularly for long confinement, and as I think prudence and discretion are the better parts of honor as well as valor, why then, rather than to run up Channel, I'd sooner see the

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head of this craft put to the westward, steering off for Yankee land."

"Well, I don't believe the skipper will have much respect for your feelings," grunted out the old prize-master, "and in my way of thinking we shall finish this cruise before many days roll over our heads."

"What do you mean by that?" inquired the Down Easter.

"Mean," returned the other, "why I mean just this, that in my opinion, we are going up Channel, and that's all one, you know, as running the gauntlet; so when we get up yonder, we shall not be long before we have plenty of work one way or the other, that is, we shall fall in with plenty of vessels, and they will either be men-of-war or merchantmen. Now if they are men-of-war, why then the game is up with us, for we shall be sure to be taken, and then the cruise is finished. Now if we should happen to fall in with merchant vessels, and make two or three prizes, why then, in that case, we shall square away for the United States; but mind what I say, if we should take any prizes in this region, it would be little less than a miracle, if they are not re-captured."

During this conversation, to which the officers of the ward-room were attentively listening, the doctor inquired very gravely, in reference to the capture of crusing vessels by the enemy, what disposition was made of the surgeon.

"I have heard," he continued, that they are considered as non-combatants, consequently they are not put

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under close confinement, but are entitled, with the captain and first lieutenant, to their parole."

"A very wise consideration," replied the old soaking prize-master, "on the part of the British, for the Lord himself knows that they could have affixed a more appropriate name to these gentry, except that some credit may be given to them for the shedding of blood."

"That may be true with many of them," observed the Down Easter, "but our surgeon will never have that sin to answer for, that is, I mean on board of this craft. Now what he may have done on shore in the way of taking off arms and legs, and shedding blood in this way, is not for me to say;"—the Down Easter would have proceeded farther, but was suddenly interrupted by the non-combatant, who remarked, that if the patient, upon whom he had performed the operation of amputating the leg, bled to death, it was not his fault, because the operation was performed according to the laws of science and medical practice.

"That may be, but the Lord help me," said the Down Easter, "if a man is to bleed to death according to the laws of science, and that science to be exhibited by such practitioners, who don't know how to take up the arteries, and save a man's life; why then I say, the Lord defend me from such, for I had rather the ball would pass through my body and do the work genteelly, than to come under the cutting and slashing of many of those who are dubbed with the title of M. D."

As this conversation no doubt was intended for the doctor, and as it applied to him in truth, he said but

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little in his own defence, and after a confirmation of his suggestion, in regard to the parole of surgeons, he shrunk back into one corner of the ward-room, well satisfied that in any event his condition would not be as bad as that of any other part of the crew.

Morning brought with it one of those beautiful and bland days, which are so rare on the coast of England at this season of the year. The wind was light, the sea smooth, and the horizon clearly defined; the look-out was at his station aloft before the sun made his appearance, while the practised eye of the seaman (which had been strengthened by long use,) ranged the whole circumference of the horizon by a long and searching gaze; his silence proclaimed the intelligence that there were not any vessels in sight. The customary duties of the morning watch were being performed, and when finished, seven bells denoted the welcome news for the hour of breakfast. This necessary duty being performed, and the watch on deck at their accustomed duties, the officers of the ward-room were all summoned on deck, after which a consultation began as follows:

"Gentlemen," observed the Commander, "I have thought proper to call upon you, in order that each may give his opinion in regard to the general interest of this cruise, as well as the interest of each one of us in particular. You are all aware that on this cruising ground we run much hazard, and in this particular season of the year, dense mists and fogs are exceedingly prevalent. The experience of one day alone has shown us,

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that little can be done with any degree of security in such weather. Again, should any vessels heave in sight, they are more likely to be men-of-war than merchantmen, for the plain reason that few vessels, (except those that are well manned and armed,) will venture out without convoy. To remain here, therefore, of course must be attended with danger, and without the chance of success. I have weighed this matter, and think the better plan to adopt is, to run well up Channel. It is true we shall be likely to fall in with men-of-war, but we shall be much more likely to fall in with merchantmen there, than on this cruising ground. I am aware that we shall increase the hazard of being captured, but then it is necessary to our success, that we risk the chances of war, for unless we do so, we may as well give up the interest of the cruise, and steer immediately away for the United States."

The Commander paused a moment, and then requested the first lieutenant to give his opinion freely, without bias, or with any reference to that which he had just advanced.

"In my judgment," observed the first lieutenant, "to remain any longer on this ground would only be a consumption of time, and a waste of provisions and water; for we have the most positive demonstration, by the small amount of provisions and water, that in any case it cannot be long before we must go into port. I therefore coincide with your opinion, sir, to leave this ground as quick as possible, and run up Channel. It is true we shall incur some risk, but I trust with caution

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and a good look-out, we shall ultimately finish the cruise with honor and profit."

After the first lieutenant had given his opinion, each of the officers were interrogated in their turn; some of whom coincided with the first lieutenant, but the greater part of them were decidedly opposed in getting so close to "John Bull's dominion," as they termed it. While this consultation was being carried on, and many conflicting opinions advanced, it was suddenly interrupted by a report from the look-out at the mast-head, that a sail was in sight to the westward. In a very short time the Cruiser was under a press of sail, with her head on the trail of the stranger. The state of feeling which now existed on board of the Cruiser was indeed very different from that high excitement which was manifested on such occasions on the former part of the cruise; whether this was owing to the perilous location of the cruising ground, or the prospect of running up Channel and thus increase the risk of being captured, or whether it was owing to a want of that confidence which they ought to have, in the ability of the Commander, or whether the combination of these circumstances together, had not their united influence to produce this apparent listlessness, is a matter I shall leave to the opinion of the reader. It is true every preparation was made for action, but then even a casual observer would not be at a loss to discover, that there was but little desire to encounter the enemy.

There was now every prospect that the Cruiser would overhaul the chase before night, as two hours had

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scarcely passed since the stranger was first made, and her courses were already raised from the deck, and further, it was yet early in the day. So rapidly did the Cruiser come up with the chase, that before two o'clock her character was ascertained to be a brig standing to the westward, and her whole appearance was that of a merchant vessel. At five o'clock the stranger was in reach of Long Tom, and after the first salutation she rounded to, and displayed the Dutch flag at her peak. In thirty minutes the boats of the Cruiser might have been seen boarding the Dutchman, from whom they not only received some supplies of provisions and water, but also important information. This brig was from Liverpool, bound to Surinam, the captain of which informed the Commander of the Cruiser, that the combined Mediterranean and West India fleet of merchantmen were now at their rendezvous in Cork, and would sail in a very few days under a strong convoy. The Dutch skipper was remunerated liberally for his provisions and water, and after expressing many thanks to him, for his kindness and the information he had given, he stood on his course to the southward and westward. On the receipt of this important intelligence, as might have been supposed, it produced a universal burst of feeling and excitement; for it was confidently believed, that the Commander's experience had taught him a salutary lesson, so that in the event of falling in with this fleet, he would not rashly or imprudently jeopardize the Cruiser or the lives of the crew, and throw away the chances of completing the cruise;

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nevertheless they relied more implicitly on the judgment and coolness of the first lieutenant, and as the Commander had manifested a disposition to act measurably in concert with the judgment of his officers, it reconciled them to the perilous undertaking of cruising up Channel, so that they might fall in with the fleet. The Cruiser's head was now put to the eastward, and as they were in hourly expectation of hard chasing or hard fighting, they embraced the present favorable opportunity to ascertain with the greatest precision her best trim for sailing, and her best rates. After repeated trials, it was decided that her greatest proportional speed was before the wind, although she was no laggard close hauled. Being now satisfied in regard to her sailing, every preparation was made for action, such as fitting preventer slings for the yards and gaffs, stoppers for the rigging, tomkins for shot-holes, &c., the armament was also put in the best order, and additional ammunition was being made ready with cartridge and ball; in short, the Cruiser was now in the best possible preparation, according to her strength, either for the fight or chase.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE YOUNG SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE CONCLUDED

THE following morning, after having received the important intelligence from the Dutch brig, the Cruiser might have been seen, steering gallantly up the Irish Channel. Her snow-white canvass, which was now spread on every yard and spar, looked at a small distance, like a white cloud, and formed a striking contrast to the dark, heavy appearance, that marked in these days the distinction between the American and British cruiser. She glided along over the surface of the smooth sea, as a creature of life and reason, obedient to every impulse, and increasing her speed as sail after sail was spread. Like an ocean-bird that floats on its native element, so the Cruiser, with buoyant wings, was driven forward, over the swelling flood, toward her intended place of destination and probable conflict.

Every heart (excepting those of the more reflecting,) was light and merry, nor dreamed of any reverse of circumstances. To this enjoyment the musical powers of Jimmy contributed not a little, and although the main-deck and forecastle presented the bright gleams of

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sunshine, yet there were those on the quarter-deck and ward-room whose whole exterior depicted the lowering cloud of foreboding evil; yet no traces of fear or cowardice could be discovered, and if every heart could have been laid open for inspection, the result would have been that no quailing or flinching would be manifested in the hottest battle or the hardest chase.

"Well, messmate," observed the boatswain to the young seaman, "I believe we are now in the Channel, and it won't be long with this fine weather, before something heaves in sight to make work for us. Now whether it will be good work or bad work, is not for me to say; but there is one thing I will say, and that is, that this craft was never in a better condition to fight or run (except that we've not got men enough,) than she is now, and I should n't mind having a bit of a dust, with an equal chance, especially if our first lieutenant has his way in the matter; but just so sure as that madcap skipper of ours takes to his old follies again, and we should get jammed up this Channel, why then the jig's up with us, and there 's an end on 't."

"We have been messmates together," replied the young seaman, "upwards of three years, and I know not how it is, yet there is something in my heart which tells me, that one of us will never reach the United States again. How often, my friend, have I told you in regard to my own history, that the brightest prospects have terminated with evil. And what is our condition at the present moment? Almost every heart seems to bound with joy, nay even the condition

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of this craft, and the bright and beautiful weather, and the glorious sun, that sends forth its refulgent rays, giving light and heat to creation, all seem to inspire the heart with feelings of happiness and ultimate success; yet the very reverse has taken entire possession of my feelings. Yes, there is a dark cloud of foreboding evil, which has gathered around me, and although I fear not to face the enemy or death if need be, yet I cannot say that this pulse of mine moves quite as regularly, when I contemplate the hour that I shall be called to separate from you."

This prophetical declaration, made a very serious impression upon the boatswain.

"Well, well," the old tar replied, "I can't help beheving what you say, and I know you're not the lad to flinch; but what's the use of taking all this melancholy upon interest? Come, come, messmate, cheer up, and let's take things as they come, for d'ye see, I believe you and I will have some bright days together after all. It's very true, by the way, that your prophesying generally comes out like a good lunar observation."

"What do you mean by that?" observed the young seaman.

"Why just this," replied the boatswain. "When the distance is worked up, you'll know exactly where the ship is; but if what you say should turn out to be so, and as we have a bit of time in our watch below, why I'd like to hear the balance of your yarn."

The young seaman complied as follows:

"I accepted without hesitation, aye, and without re-

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flection too, the challenge which I had received, and after addressing a note to this effect to the gamester, I delivered it to his friend. We arranged the usual matters, such as the weapons, distance, time, place, &c. Nothing was now left for me to do except to procure a friend, who should act as my second; this was easily effected, in the person of one with whom I was very intimate, and in whom I had confided all my past history. Would you believe it, my friend? my whole soul was so filled with the thoughts of revenge on the miscreant wretch, that I scarcely thought of my fair E——, nor the dreadful crime which I was about to commit, nor the offence against the laws. All these were foreign to my thoughts and feelings, yet I had made the necessary arrangements to elude the arm of the law and make my escape, should my antagonist fall in this contest. When, however, the excitement of the day passed off, and cool reflection assumed its empire, then I shuddered at the prospect before me. It is true, I was about to raise my arm against the life of a fellow creature. But then, did he not deserve punishment? Was not his heart as black as his life was infamous? Had he not been guilty of the basest crimes of robbery and murder? Was he not too the author of all my sorrows and woes? These questions could be answered affirmatively, yet they could not, and did not quiet my conscience. O, no! there is an hour of retributive justice rolling on, when the murderer's doom shall be irrevocably fixed, and shall I by this act place myself among that number, and be instrumental in

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hurrying a wretch to his final doom? These reflections nearly overpowered my senses. I shuddered in wild amazement, and would have retraced my steps, but alas! I had gone too far, and if I now retracted, I should be branded with the epithet of coward. I could not bear it, and the laws of honor (falsely so called,) forbade retraction. I thought of my fair E——; her love and constancy were more virtuous and true, than romance has ever delineated. Alas! would she not despise the hand that could imbrue itself in human blood? And would she unite a heart pure and spotless to one that had been guilty of the foul deed of murder? O, no! she could not, she would not; the lovely and beauteous flower would be nipped by the withering blasts of sorrow, until death should transplant it to a purer and fairer clime. My friend, I would have given worlds to have recalled one short day. It was not yet too late, but alas! I had not moral courage to stop, but rushing madly on, I sought to drown my feelings in the fashionable amusements of the day. But these afforded no relief.

"The appointed time of meeting drew near. I wrote to E——, with renewed protestations of love and constancy, with my determination of making another voyage to the East Indies, and then throw myself at her feet. This letter was written with a trembling hand, hastily sealed, and sent off; after which I prepared myself for the conflict. The day and hour had now arrived. We met with our seconds according to

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appointment, and as the laws of duelling gave me the choice of weapons and distance, I selected pistols, and the distance to be twelve paces. I fixed a keen glance upon my antagonist, and saw that he was pale and haggard, his whole frame shaking violently, and it was evident to the most superficial observer, that his courage had failed. Unwilling to take the advantage of him, I sought a reconciliation, through the medium of my friend; but his friend declined any compromise, except by exchange of shots. The distance was measured, and by lot he had the first shot. He fired, and the ball grazed the back of my neck, merely breaking the skin. It now came to my turn, and I discharged my pistol in the air, and still asked for a compromise. His friend and himself were inexorable, and apparently elated in having another chance, and, as I supposed, thirsting for my blood, he fired again without any effect. As it was impossible to come to any terms of reconciliation, I determined, if possible, to avoid killing him, but at the same time to inflict such a wound as would place him beyond the power of renewing the attack. I discharged my pistol, and he fell.

"I saw no more. My friend hurried me away from the ground to a place of concealment, in order that I might avoid the infliction of the law, until the ship was ready to sail for the East Indies. The deepest suspense hung over the next twenty-four hours; all was dark, gloomy, and foreboding. I had now shed human blood and whether the subject of my wrongs had received a mortal wound or not, was a matter that involved my

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peace of mind forever. The mental sufferings of a few short hours nearly deprived me of existence. At length, however, I was relieved from this state of insufferable anguish; my friend informed me that he had ascertained that the wound was not mortal, the ball having entered above the shoulder blade, had been extracted, and that his confinement would be of short duration. In a few days the ship was ready for sea. Again I wrote to my dearest E——, and gave her an account of all that had passed, imploring her forgiveness and the continuance of her unabated love. Once more, then, I found myself measurably free, and as the ship was to sail immediately, I left my place of concealment, embarked on board, and was soon installed with the first officer's berth. We got under way immediately, and with a leading breeze and flowing sheet, in a few hours I bade adieu to the place of my sufferings, and to the home that contained all that was dear to me on earth.

"Rumor, with her busy tongue, and with much exaggeration, had detailed the account of my unhappy meeting with the gamester; but then it operated greatly to my advantage on board, for I was extolled as a courageous chap that would not dodge at a shot, but also that my conduct in the whole affair was honorable, and that my antagonist richly merited punishment at my hands. Nor was this all; this affair procured for me a degree of respect and awe from my superior, as well as the crew, to which perhaps I was not entitled. I will not enter into a detail of this voyage, suffice it to say

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that nothing transpired of particular import. I believe that I discharged the duties of my station to the entire satisfaction of the Commander.

"We arrived in the United States after a year's absence, and as I had distinguished myself, and my conduct was much approved, I was offered an excellent command.

"Now then my friend, you perceive that I had re-established my reputation, and could honorably claim my prize, having fulfilled my pledge. The sun shone brilliantly upon my prospects, although dark clouds would occasionally flit across my mind and obscure the future. Nevertheless the buoyancy of youth, and the bright and cheering path that lay before me, and above all, that my dearest E—— would soon be mine, by virtue of all that was sacred and honorable—all these considerations conspired to make me happy, and drive far away every unwelcome anxiety.

"Alas! this was the happiness of anticipation, destined never to have an existence in reality. It was the morning of brightness, that exhibited the cloudless sky and brilliant orb of day, which, ere he had performed half his destined round, was shrouded in gloom, and storms and tempests closed the mournful scene. I had scarcely reached the place of my nativity, when my ear was saluted with the overwhelming and dreadful intelligence, that she for whom I had braved every danger—who had been the stimulus of all my acts—that she whose love never diminished, and whose constancy for me had never shaken, and whose

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last words were an invocation that Heaven would grant a meeting of our two spirits in that bright world where the blighting sorrows of earth are unknown—that this dearest object of all my affection and love, was no more. Overwhelmed with the dreadful shock, my firmness entirely forsook me, and it was many days before I recovered sufficient composure of mind, to listen to the details of her illness and subsequent death. Exaggerated accounts of my unhappy rencontre with the gamester, reached her through the medium of the newspapers, in which it was stated that a bloody affair had taken place, in which I had killed my antagonist, and that I was obliged to leave my country forever. This account was never contradicted, and although she had received my letter, which detailed the account of the whole affair, yet it was so entirely different from that in the newspaper, that she knew not on which to rely. Numerous vague reports, some of which were not very favorable to my character as a duellist, were freely circulated, and which made such a melancholy impression upon her mind, that her health gradually declined, and her delicate frame sunk under the violence of the shock it had received. Yet the pure breathings of her love for me, were poured forth in her greatest bodily and mental affliction; and never for a moment did she doubt my honor, or by any word or action cast a shade of reproach upon my integrity.

"Notwithstanding the predictions of physicians and friends, her father could not realize that her end was near. He still dreamed that she might be raised again

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to comparative health, and be spared a while longer; and to her earnest and solemn predictions that the parting hour was near, he still replied in the language of hope and assurance. The pure spirit that still inhabited the tenement of clay, notwithstanding the assurance of her father, was rapidly passing to mingle in celestial joy with bright seraphs above, while expressions of holy trust, showed that the spirit felt its affinity to the world of purity and peace she was approaching. She died praying for me.

"Time's withering hand can never, my friend, efface the sad remembrance of those days. Solitary and alone I struck the pathway that led to the noise and bustle of the seaport, and notwithstanding the tumultuous confusion and hurry which in every street crowded upon me, yet more and more the loneliness of my condition, gathered around my poor heart, and the gay and busy world afforded me no consolation, for I looked upon it all as one vast charnel house. In short, my mind became so much depressed, that I was compelled, if I may thus speak, to fly from myself. I wandered up and down, not having any definite object in view, except that a vague thought would sometimes cross my mind, that if I could find one in whom I could confide, and to whom I could unburthen my soul, and pour forth the sorrow of my heart, I should then be relieved.

"My messmate you know the rest. In you I have found a faithful friend, and to you have I poured forth the sorrows of my aching spirit. I look only to death for

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comfort. Then I shall be ready to enter into the enjoyment of peace and happiness, to which I have been a stranger on earth."

Overcome by this sad and melancholy recital, the tears fell from the young seaman's eyes, and he sunk back, and strove to hide his anguish from his sympathizing friend.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

CAPTURE OF A BRITISH BRIG IN A FOG, WITH THE BOATS

THE wind blew briskly from the south-west, with thick foggy weather, as the Cruiser dashed along over the rough sea under short sail; from the observation of the previous day, she was now judged to be off the old Head Kinsale; consequently the deepest anxiety prevailed, for the information received from the Dutch brig was correct. It was now time for the fleet to be under way. But in this state of weather she would be as likely to pounce alongside of a man-of-war, as a merchantman; and although on the one hand they might consider the dense mist as a friend, yet on the other, the chances were two to one against them. However, nothing daunted, they dashed along, being determined to risk all the chances against them in reference to the weather, and improve all the favorable circumstances which were afforded to them by the dense fog which now prevailed.

The wind freshened, and ever and anon blew in fitful gusts, driving the mist before it, so that now and then objects might be seen at a half a mile distance; but soon the fog again shut in, and objects could not be seen the

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length of the vessel. This, indeed, was highly favorable to the Cruiser; for if perchance she got into the fleet, she would of course have the advantage of selecting out a merchant vessel, at the same time the fog would enable her to keep clear of the convoy. The morning watch passed away with the same state of weather, and nothing was seen by the look out aloft; but they were not long destined to remain inactive, or without some source of excitement; for before two hours had passed away in the forenoon watch, the fog raised up from the surface of the water, and discovered the Cruiser to be in the midst of the fleet. Scarcely had they time to take the bearing of a large merchant brig, that was about an eighth of a mile distant, ere the whole fleet was again shrouded from the view by the dense and impenetrable fog. The greatest caution and prudence was now necessary. At first it was thought best to run the Cruiser alongside the brig, and carry her by boarding. This plan, however, was overruled by the first lieutenant, because, as he affirmed, should the fog clear up when the two vessels were in contact, and should they be seen by the convoy, of course it would create suspicion, and the Cruiser would be taken and the prize re-captured.

"In my judgment," observed the first lieutenant to the Commander, "our best plan is, to endeavor to take that brig with our boats, and if we succeed, of course we shall avoid alarming the convoy, and we may then put prize-master and crew on board of her, with orders

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to keep with the fleet until night, and then make the best of her way to the United States."

The proposition of the lieutenant was so plausible, that it met with the entire approbation of the Commander. But now a dangerous service was to be performed, and it required stout hearts to carry it into execution. Volunteers were called for, when the boatswain and the young seaman were in the foremost rank. The complement, however, was soon completed, and twenty men were despatched in the two boats, the one commanded by the second lieutenant, and the other by a prize-master with our two heroes.

Now the danger of this service was not confined exclusively to the boarding of the brig, but the peril was increased from the fact that one of the boats was small, and it would require great management and ability to keep her afloat in the heavy sea which was now running; but she was ably manned, and if courage and skill could execute this enterprise, they were not wanting in these two boats. They were, however, ordered to keep alongside until the fog should clear away, so that the bearings of the brig could be correctly taken. The wind now increased, and the fog, which had not lifted for the last hour, seemed to increase in density. In a moment of the deepest anxiety the shadow of the brig, which was now close on board, shot through the almost impenetrable gloom, and in the next minute she was lost sight of in the fog.

"B-o-a-r-d-e-r-s a-w-a-y!" shouted the Commander.

The fasts were cast off, and during the next minute,

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the boats were seen pulling on the top of the waves, and then disappearing in the impenetrable mist.

For several minutes, the Cruiser stood on the same tack as that on which the brig was steering, and in the same direction which the boats had given way. Ten minutes—twenty minutes! the Cruiser stood on, yet nothing was seen of the brig or the boats. But if they were perplexed and anxious in the Cruiser, they were much more so, and indeed had much greater cause to be perplexed and anxious in the boats; for it not only required all their skill, but also excessive labor to keep them above water. Add to this the deep state of uncertainty in regard to the position and course of the brig. Now they might be seen struggling with almost supernatural strength at the oars, endeavoring to impel their frail barks against the heavy sea. Then again they might have been seen driving away with incredible rapidity before the wind, and the roaring sea with crested tops breaking over them, while the dashing spray in heavy showers came tumbling in the boats. The weight and pressure of this body of water, had nearly swamped them.

The perplexity of their situation now gave way to a very different feeling, for until the last ten minutes the boats had managed to keep in sight of each other, but now they were separated, and chance alone would again throw them together. For the next ten minutes it required all the exertions of the lesser boat's crew (which was commanded by the prize-master) to keep her afloat, for a squall had rendered her nearly unmanageable;

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and they were obliged to let her drive before the wind and sea, which poured in on either side, so that it required more than human exertions to keep her from sinking. After the strength of the squall had passed over, and the bow of the boat was laid head to sea, the prize-master inquired of the boatswain, what course he thought most likely would bring them in sight of the brig or the boat.

"Why, as to the matter of that," replied the old tar, "one way is about as good as another, but in my way of thinking, if we keep our bow head to this cockling sea, we may fall in with our shipmates."

"What's that," inquired the young seaman hastily, as a dark shadow shot across his vision.

The next moment two or three voices exclaimed, "The boat—the boat."

The surprise and satisfaction was so great at this unexpected but much desired meeting, that for a few minutes the object of this perilous enterprise was measurably forgotten.

At length, however, a plan was concerted, so that if possible they might not again separate; for the chances were indeed very limited to fall in with the brig, and it would require all their care and management to keep the small boat from sinking, as she had strained and worked hard, and her gun-wales were carried away by the violence of the waves. It therefore became absolutely necessary that the larger boat should be near to save the crew of the other, in the event of her foundering.

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These arrangements being all made, again they tugged at the oars for the next half hour, and with incredible labor they managed to keep head on to the sea. But the fatigue occasioned by these great exertions nearly exhausted their strength, and they had nearly come to the conclusion to give over the chase, when a sail was discovered not more than thirty yards to windward.

"The Cruiser—the Cruiser!" was the cry of many voices.

And they were not deceived, for the next moment she darted past the boats like an arrow, without perceiving them, close-hauled on the larboard tack.

The chagrin and mortification of the boats' crews may be more easily imagined than described, because it was highly probable that the Cruiser had seen the Englishman, and was now steering on the same course, so as to protect the boats. It was agreed, therefore, to keep after the Cruiser, as the safest plan for their own security, and also to fall in with the brig.

Again the bows of the boats were directed on the track in which the Cruiser was last seen, and it required all their remaining strength and skill to keep them in that position. The mist had become if possible more dense, and of course it increased more and more their difficulty. They toiled incessantly; pulling, and baling the water from the boats for three quarters of an hour. Faint and weary with extreme exhaustion, they were about to lay their oars in and let the boat drive along at the mercy of the wind and waves; but just at that

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critical moment (when both the mind and the body were completely worn out with fatigue, and which had brought on a kind of apathetic listlessness,) the brig was seen close under the lee. She was discovered simultaneously by the two boats.

"Give way, my lads!" shouted the prize-master and the second lieutenant at the same instant.

The order was unnecessary, for the men sprung to the oars like so many lions, and in the course of the next ten minutes, the two boats were grappled to the Englishman's main chains, on the lee side.

"Keep in your boats," shouted the English skipper, "or I will sink you."

The discharge of a brace of pistols by the young seaman, obliged John Bull to retreat from his position. Taking advantage of the temporary absence, the crew of the small boat, with the prize-master, boatswain, and the young seaman, at their head, sprang up the side and gained the deck before the English Captain had time to rally.

It was in vain for him now to contend against ten resolute, determined, well-armed men; for although some resistance was made, yet they were soon overpowered by the courage and impetuosity of the Yankee tars, and in less than fifteen minutes after they had gained the deck, the British brig was a prize to the Americans.

According to the previous arrangement, the prize-master and crew, (that had composed the crew of the larger boat,) now took possession of the brig, and to the

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great joy and satisfaction of the Americans, this arrangement had scarcely been finished when the Cruiser hove in sight, about forty yards to windward. She immediately bore down, and very soon learned that her boats had captured the brig.

The Americans, all except the prize crew, again took to their boats. The Captain of the brig, with one half the crew, were also taken on board the Cruiser. But although she had run to leeward of the prize, yet it was not without the greatest difficulty and exertion that the small boat was kept afloat, for when within about ten yards of the Cruiser, she went down, and the crew narrowly escaped with their lives, being saved by the other boat. The joy and satisfaction of all on board, at the capture of the brig, and especially the praise that was bestowed on the prize-master, boatswain, young seaman, and crew of the small boat, knew no bounds. Indeed, the perilous situation of the Cruiser and her prize was almost lost sight of, from the fact that the brig was richly laden, and if she reached the United States in safety, the proceeds of her sale would nett at least five hundred dollars per share. The joy and transport of the crew may therefore be imagined, and it was not till the fog had once more lifted (which presented several vessels close by) that this feeling merged into another source of high excitement; for the expectations of the crew were now wrought up to the highest point, from the fact that the bearings of a splendid looking merchant ship were taken, and so confident were they of capturing this vessel, that the

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prize-master and crew were selected to take possession of her. Their excitement was also kept up by the assurance that had been given by the Commander, that after the capture of one more prize, they would return directly to the United States. Gratified beyond measure at the speedy prospect of their return, as well as highly elated at the almost certainty of capturing another prize, every command was obeyed with the utmost cheerfulness, nor did they for once dream of any thing but home, a large amount of prize-money, and the consequent jovial sprees when on shore.

The interminable fog had again settled, and so thick and dense, that objects could not be seen the length of the vessel. The Cruiser was now close hauled on the larboard tack, and the ship when last seen, was on the same tack, under a press of sail. The next minute, no trace could be seen of her through the impenetrable mist, and the exultation and excitement were measurably lost, for every moment the perilous situation of the Cruiser increased, as she had been standing on that tack for nearly four hours; consequently it was judged they were in the vicinity of the convoy.

"What is your opinion," observed the Commander to the first lieutenant, "in regard to the sailing of that ship whose bearings were taken."

"It is impossible to answer that question," replied the lieutenant, "as we have no opportunity of ascertaining her speed"

"Where away do you think she may be now?" again observed the Commander.

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"In my judgment," replied the first lieutenant, "we cannot be a great distance apart, and I sincerely hope that it may not be long before this fog clears away sufficiently, so that we may get sight of her, for the risk of falling in with the convoy increases upon us every moment."

The Commander was silent and thoughtful, and after a few moments changed the conversation, and remarked that they would be amply compensated, if the brig which they had just taken arrived safe into the United States. At that moment, the mist was driven away before the south-west gale, when not only the ship, their intended victim, but several other vessels, among which the prize brig was seen. The brig, however, was dodging about as if she had neither helm, pilot, or commander. This was not a matter of much surprise, for the old soaking prize-master had charge of her, and it was supposed that the brandy bottle had charge of him; in the next five minutes all again was lost sight of in the mist.

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CHAPTER XXX.

THE DOOM OF THE CRUISER.

PERHAPS there is no situation more perilous in time of war than to be on the enemy's coast, in the midst of a fleet under strong convoy, and, at the same time, immersed in an impenetrable mist. This, then, was the situation and condition of the Cruiser. It is true there were some advantages; but even when the dense fog would settle or lift up from the surface of the ocean, the interim was so limited between that and the profound gloom that obscured every object from the vision, that it was impossible to designate the peaceful merchant vessel from a man-of-war. No mistake, however, could possibly have been made in regard to the ship which had been selected for the next prize; the only difficulty that could now occur arose from the circumstance that as the mist was clearing off to windward, it would bring the Cruiser in sight of the convoy before she could possibly make the second capture.

The ship was again seen directly ahead, at not more than the distance of a musket shot off. It had been determined to run the Cruiser alongside and carry her by boarding; and so confident were they that the ship

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would be in possession of the Cruiser, that the baggage and trunks of the prize-master and crew were at the gangway to be in readiness to throw on board of the prize. Every moment their expectations increased, as the Cruiser was overhauling her rapidly.

"Sail ho!" shouted the look out from the mast head, "three points on the starboard bow, and standing on the starboard tack; she is close aboard, sir, and looks like a frigate."

The fog was now driven away to leeward by the wind, and in a few minutes the frigate shot out of the mist not more than five hundred yards distant from the Cruiser. The enemy being under her topsails and foretopsail stay-sail, immediately crowded on her canvass, and stood on until she had reached the Cruiser's quarter, then tacked and discharged her forward division, or battery, at the Cruiser, which however did no other damage than to cut away two of her lee main shrouds, which were quickly secured with stoppers. The Cruiser was hauled close by the wind, and, as it blew stiffly, it became a fair trial of speed between the two vessels. In less than thirty minutes it was abundantly evident that the Cruiser not only held a better wind, but considerably fore-reached the enemy. If this advantage, therefore, had continued, the Cruiser could have escaped without much difficulty; but a perplexing circumstance now arose, from the fact that the prize brig was but a short distance off, and from her manœuvres the least sagacious seaman would immediately discover that something was wrong.

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Now, as the Cruiser was in the midst of the fleet, the strong presumption among all the officers was that the frigate would come at the truth, or that her officers would immediately know that she was a captured vessel.

As this, then, was the undivided opinion on the quarter deck of the Cruiser, and, as no doubt remained of the superiority of her sailing upon a wind, it was therefore thought advisable by the Commander to bear up before the wind; expressing his belief that the Cruiser would greatly outsail the frigate, and by this manœuvre they would save the prize brig, as the frigate no doubt would continue the chase after the Cruiser. The first lieutenant immediately remonstrated against this measure.

"Observe," he continued, "is she not more than one point under our lee quarter, and scarcely a gun shot distance from us; now if this craft is kept before the wind, in less than five minutes the enemy will have the weather guage; besides, we shall be closing in with the frigate, so that her whole broadside will bear upon us."

The opinion of every officer on board was now taken, and all coincided with the first lieutenant, that the only plan to secure the safety of the Cruiser was still to keep her close by the wind under a press of sail. The Commander, however, obstinately persisted in his own opinion, and ordered all the light sails to be got in readiness for the contemplated movement.

"A pretty decent kind of business this," observed

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the boatswain to the young seaman; "in my way of thinking we shall make a sorry afternoon's work on 't. Well, well, I thought just as much, for when our skipper takes his own head for it, why then there's always some mishap."

"See all clear there forward, to set the square-sail and studding-sail! Port your helm, and run out the canvass!" shouted the officer of the deck, having previously received these orders from the Commander.

The next minute the Cruiser was running before the wind under a crowd of sail.

"We'll have a short jig on 't this time," said the boatswain to his young friend, "or I'll miss my reck'ning."

Just at that moment the frigate yawed off, and discharged her forward battery with tremendous effect; cutting away the fore gaff, fore yard, and shivering the lee bulwarks into a hundred fragments.

The Commander now saw his error, but it was too late.

"Luff!" he shouted, "haul aft the sheets, and take in all the light sails."

Every man sprung to his duty, but the principal sail for the Cruiser was now rendered useless from the fact that the gaff was cut away. This, however, was remedied in fifteen minutes; all the light sails were taken in, and once more the Cruiser was close-hauled by the wind. But the error was now irretrievable, for the frigate had not only gained upon the Cruiser, but she had also the weather guage. She kept up a heavy

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and constant fire, which was occasionally returned by Long Tom with some execution. The enemy being to windward, came down rapidly on the Cruiser with flowing sheets, and the next discharge from her battery sealed the fate of the Cruiser, for her main-topping-lifts were cut away; so that what, with the heavy seas and the immense weight of the boom, the main sheet was immediately parted, causing the heavy spar to take possession of the quarter-deck, — smashing and tearing away the bulwarks on either side into a thousand pieces, until the Cruiser was relieved from this additional enemy by the dexterity of the carpenter's axe, who cut away the spar amid a shower of bullets from the enemy. There was now another misfortune — the ensign halliards had been rove to the main-topping-lift; these were also cut away, and the stars and stripes wound their folds around the lifts, and could not be hauled down. The frigate now came up hand over hand, and took about a musket shot off on the weather quarter of the Cruiser, keeping up a most deadly and murderous fire, and the little craft lay like a log upon the water nearly unmanageable. The enemy ceased firing with her large guns, after which she took her position abeam of the Cruiser, and then opened a most galling fire with the musketry of the marines. During the whole of this fire the Commander of the Cruiser stood on the trunk in full uniform; a musket ball passed through his hat, and another through his coat. Many of the crew by this time lay wounded upon the deck,

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but a greater part went below, by order of the first lieutenant.

Every yard of canvass spread on the Cruiser was rent by the shot of the enemy; her fore top-mast, fore yard, jib-boom, and head of the main-mast were cut away, and she was now totally unmanageable. There was a moment of awful suspense; the marines ceased firing, and immediately a sheet of flame issued from six thirty-two pound carronades; every shot did execution, and the little craft was ripped up fore and aft; her decks were literally cut to pieces; both arm-chests, which were lashed on the trunk, were shivered into a hundred fragments; in short, she was now in a sinking condition, and the prevalent opinion among the few officers that remained on deck was that the enemy did not intend to show any quarter. It is true the American ensign was still aloft, but that too was cut to pieces, and it was impossible to cut it away. It was highly probable, therefore, that John Bull was greatly incensed from the fact of the Cruiser's having made some resistance; and seeing the colors still were aloft, and not knowing the cause of it, it is possible this might have been the reason of his long continued and murderous fire.

The mystery, however, was in a few minutes solved; for, as the frigate dropped down close to the wreck, she discovered the reason why the stars and stripes were still aloft, and immediately ceased her fire. Several boats from the frigate were now despatched to the Cruiser, to take possession, and convey the prisoners on board. In a few minutes the Cruiser's decks were

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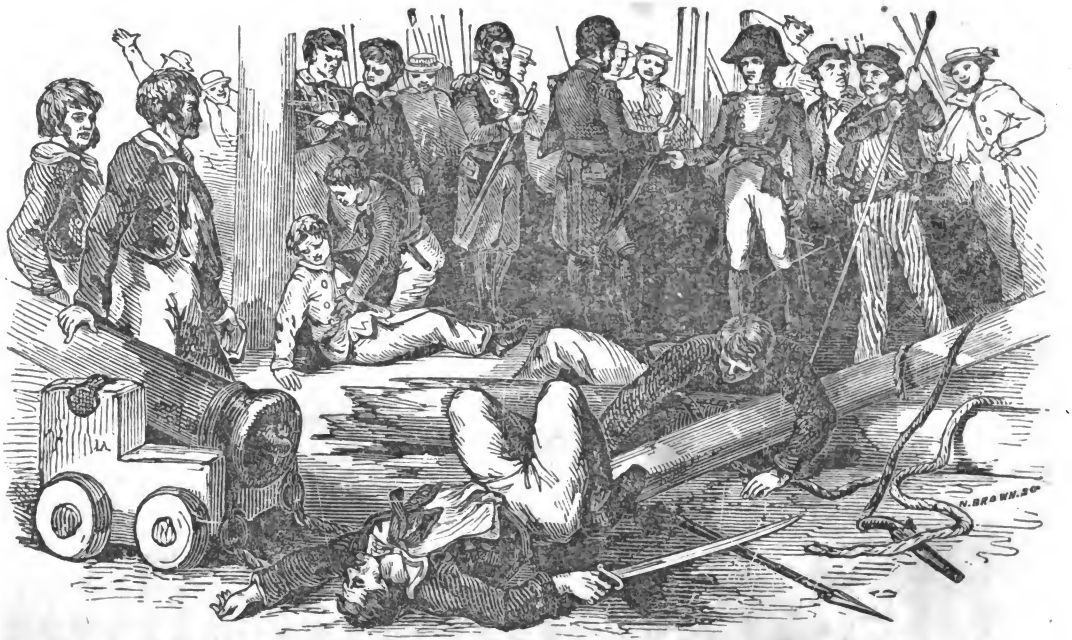

The Commander of the Cruiser giving up his Sword to the Lieutenant of the British Frigate.

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covered with Englishmen, and the Commander, after some formalities, delivered up his sword to the English lieutenant; but now a great difficulty arose with the Englishmen, for their prize was nearly unmanageable, and she was also supposed to be in a sinking condition, and they were totally unacquainted with the management of these kind of craft. Notwithstanding they allowed but a short time to the prisoners to get ready to go on board of the frigate, yet they were exceedingly desirous that one of the officers and a half a dozen of the men should remain, in order that they might show them how they might work the craft, as they were extremely anxious to get her into port. This, however, the Yankees absolutely and promptly refused, "preferring," they said, "to go on board of the frigate, than to go to Davy Jones's locker," which they affirmed the Cruiser would do in less than two hours.

Notwithstanding the excessive toil, the deep suspense and anxiety, the high excitement in the boats, and capture in the brig — the chase, action and subsequent capture of the Cruiser, not an expression of fear, misfortune, or mean submission, could be seen in the appearance or general deportment, among the officers or crew; no, not even in Jimmy Ducks, the non-combatant, or the Down Easter. Every man on board of that craft had discharged his duty faithfully, defended her gallantly, and had not flinched from his post, in the hottest of the action, and amid the most galling and murderous fire of the enemy; yet, a casual observer might have traced on every countenance the deepest

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chagrin and mortification. The more reckless part of them did not hesitate to vent their spleen and anger upon the now subdued Commander, and epithets, such as "Madman, fool, if you didn't know how to work the craft, why didn't you give her up to the first lieutenant?" were often heard. Their mortification did not arise so much from the fact of their being prisoners of war, but it referred to the foolish manner in which the Cruiser had been taken; for none were so blind or so ignorant, as not to perceive that the whole of their misfortunes were entirely owing to the obstinancy, mismanagement, and false judgment of the Commander.

But of all that crew fore and aft, none wore so high and manly a bearing as our two heroes, the boatswain and young seaman. Their undaunted courage, for they had never left the deck of the Cruiser, and had performed the most dangerous and difficult services, amid a shower of the enemy's bullets, but above all, their skill in the management of the boat, as well as their coolness and daring intrepidity in the capture of the English brig, had won for them the esteem and admiration of every man on board; and when the prisoners were ordered in the boats, the Commander solicited for them the same berth and treatment that would be conferred upon his officers; but they firmly refused to accept of any favor, other than that to which they were entitled, according to the usage of civilized nations in time of war. Shortly after the murderous and galling fire from the six thirty-two pounders from the frigate's quarter-deck, it was par-

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ceived that the Cruiser was gradually settling down into the water; for one of the shot had entered a little below her waist, forward of the gangway, which started several of the butts near the water-line. Through these apertures, the water had gradually pressed in, until she had settled sufficiently deep to bring them under water, from which time she settled rapidly, and there was scarcely sufficient time (although all the frigate's boats were employed,) to transport the prisoners and their baggage on board of the frigate, and many were the strokes of wit from the Yankee tars, as they tumbled into the boats.

"By all that's lovely," said an old quarter-master, "she is not struck yet, and she's going to pay her respects to Davy Jones, with her stars and stripes flying," for the colors were still wound round the topping-lift.

"Well, well," said the old gunner, "I should just like to have Long Tom pay his compliments to the frigate by way of politeness, before he takes his long journey."

"Come, come!" bawled out several voices, "Jimmy, let's have a bit of a ditty, to drive away our melancholy. Where's your whistle, lad?"

At the sound of the whistle Jimmy's face relaxed into a broad grin, and as he had his constant companion and his "disperser of melancholy," as he called it, always about him, he drew it forth, and would actually have given them some sweet sounds, but the officers of the boat ordered him to put up his fife. The Cruiser

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had already settled so rapidly, that the after part of her main-chains was in the water. No time was now to be lost; the last boat, with the American prisoners, had pulled off from the sinking Cruiser; none now remained on board, except the English lieutenant and a few men. For these there was a boat despatched from the frigate, and before they left her, she had settled nearly to the decks. It was a melancholy, yet a grand spectacle; for just as the sun was setting beneath the western horizon, the American Cruiser sunk beneath the blue billows, and disappeared from the sight for ever.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

TREATMENT OF THE AMERICAN PRISONERS — ARRIVAL IN PLYMOUTH.

THE reception of the American prisoners on board of his Britannic Majesty's frigate L—— was not of the most agreeable and delicate nature. Whether this was owing to the loss of the prize, or to the trouble they had in her capture, or to the audacity which the Cruiser had manifested in daring to fire a shot at his Britannic Majesty's frigate L——, or to all of these circumstances combined, the reason or reasons of the polite reception of the crew, we may leave the reader to judge. However, as they each came over the gangway, they were strictly searched and examined, after which a genteel epithet was bestowed, such as "piratical villain," &c., and then, they were driven down into the cable tier, in charge of a marine. All underwent the same scrutinizing and rigid search, with some few exceptions, for a few of the seamen were selected out as Englishmen, who were threatened by the indomitable first lieutenant to be hung up at the yard arm, for being found fighting against their country. Nor did the officers meet with a much better reception, except

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that the location assigned to them was a little more in consonance with their rank, although they, in common with the seamen, were looked upon as so many pirates; but they condescended, nevertheless, to stow them against the ward-room bulkhead, and their sleeping place (if they chose to enjoy it,) was the soft side of a plank, for they were not allowed mattrass or bedding of any description. This was truly a deplorable state of things, but it would have been infinitely worse, if their frames had not been relieved from the practical demonstration of the hard location on which they were destined to repose.

Although much could not be said in favor of the warm feelings and sensibilities of the captain and first lieutenant of the frigate, nevertheless there were some honorable exceptions among the subordinate officers. From these, especially the junior lieutenants, masters, mates and midshipmen, the officers received as much kind treatment as they could bestow; for it may be remarked, that the first lieutenant was not slow or backward in censuring all those whom he saw well disposed, or who kindly treated the American prisoners. The captain and first lieutenant of the Cruiser messed in the ward-room with the lieutenants; the other officers, six in number, messed alternately with the masters, mates and midshipmen, from whom they received a part of their own bedding, which made them tolerably comfortable. The crew, however, fared badly, for they were all stowed away in the cable tiers, nearly suffocated for want of air, and almost choked with the

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stench of the villanous compound of smells of a ship's hold. This, then, was the location assigned them for their nightly repose; they were, however, somewhat relieved in the day time, being permitted to range the spar and gun decks, from the waist forwards, and were unmolested in their loungings and spreeings about, to satisfy the various curiosities possessed by the crew, who in appearance, speech, and deportment, were different from the frigate's orderly and well-dressed seamen. The privilege, however, of ranging the gun deck was soon cut off, for the frigate's crew having much more of the milk of human kindness than the first lieutenant, not only shared their grub, and bedding, but seemed disposed in their way to alleviate their situation as prisoners of war. For this mortal offence the prisoners were not only deprived of the liberty to range the spar and gun deck, but many of the frigate's crew were severely reprimanded, while others were taken to the gangway, for disobedience of orders, and were commanded not to have any intercourse with the Yankee pirates.

But all this was not to be compared to their living; for the most rigid orders were now issued to the frigate's crew, that if they were found conveying provisions or sharing their own allowance with the prisoners, for every such offence they should be flogged at the gangway. This was a severe interdiction for the Yankees, especially as their allowance was what is called "six upon four," that is, six men are obliged to subsist on the same amount of provisions which is usually allowed

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to four men. Add to this, the provisions were of the very worst kind, viz. lean salt beef, which sailors usually denominate soldier's beef, because they affirm that it might be carried a whole campaign in the knapsack, without any danger of its being greased. The bread was of the very coarsest and blackest kind, and so old, that instead of presenting the natural qualities of its material, it seemed like a living, moving mass; for instead of the real staff of life, the greater part of it was living animals. At their breakfast and supper, they were allowed shells, — this is what sailors call an apology for cocoa. Even this, however, would have been a great treat, if they could have had a sufficient supply of the beverage; nor was this all, for the intercourse between the officers and seamen of the Cruiser, was entirely cut off. The officers were not allowed to go on the quarter-deck, but the condition of the seamen was infinitely worse, being confined night and day to the lower hold — two only being permitted to go on deck at the same time, in charge of a marine with a loaded musket; in short, nothing was left undone that could mortify the officers, and render the miseries of war more intolerable, than they ought to be, at least, among civilized nations.

Fortunately, however, for the American prisoners, this state of things was not destined to be of long duration. It seems the frigate was not attached to the fleet as one of the convoy, as she had been on the Channel station for some time previously, and as her cruise was nearly up, and having a number of prison-

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ers on board, it was determined immediately after the capture of the Cruiser to go into Plymouth in order to get rid of her incumbrances. As soon, therefore, as she had taken the Cruiser, she stood down Channel, in order to get round the Land's End of Plymouth.

It was nearly fifty-six hours before the famous chalky cliffs of England were in sight, which appeared more and more cheerful to the eye of the beholder as the frigate neared it. The frigate soon entered the famous naval depot, the port of Plymouth, and anchored far up in the harbor, having passed numerous vessels, while running in, of every fashion and rig, as well as many forts and views which are not only picturesque but extremely interesting to all who had not seen the entrance to this romantic harbor. It was a matter of great surprise and astonishment to behold the sudden and great number of boats, which were waiting for the frigate to anchor, loaded to their gunwales with eatables and gewgaws of every description, to entice the hard-earned money from the pockets of the sailors. Many of these boats were occupied by those who were prepared to 'raffic: long-bearded Jews, woolly-mouthed Christians, blarney-primed Irish, burly-bellied English, and skipjack, grinning Frenchmen, were all eager to show off the good qualities of their merchandise, and depreciate that of their neighbor, each with an earnestness, dialect, and grimace peculiar to himself. But the greater portion of the boats contained the wives and children of the seamen, who came off to welcome again their husbands and fathers to their homes. There was but little

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restriction, and people flocked off in great numbers, all claiming relatives on board, which procured them permission to enter with freedom. And it would almost seem, that half the people of England had the largest share of their relatives in this vessel, so numerously they appeared, and so constantly were they coming and going the entire day on which the frigate arrived. There was one man belonging to the frigate much esteemed by his shipmates, and was a general favorite among those who came off from the shore; for there was scarcely a boat that had not a wife, a sister, or mother of his on board, of all ages, from the gay, laughter-loving lass of sixteen, to the staid matron of fifty. Nay, some were entirely peopled with those pertaining to his family. Had he but the least portion of these motley and bedizened families to provide for, his chance was small of becoming rich from the savings of his monthly pay, or paying the debt of his nation, should he wish to be handed down to posterity as a public benefactor. However, this man knew how to keep on the fair-weather side of those who rioted in abundance, if the privilege of opinion is allowed, by the store of eatables each brought off for the regaling of themselves whilst visiting the ship, and the carte-blanche for free quarters he enjoyed with the whole troop, day and night. It is said that sailors have a wife in each port they touch at, but this addition of numbers was rather out of character. But were all wives to provide as liberally as these, it certainly is not so uncomfortable to have them in abundance. The number of females

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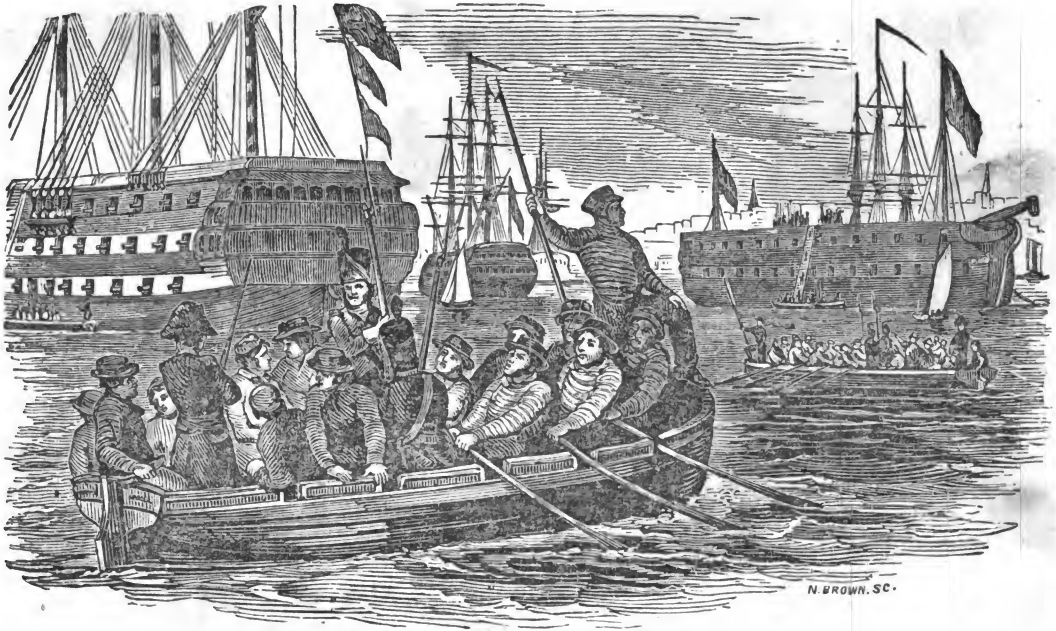

Going on board the Prison-ship at Plymouth.

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that flock on board of these men-of-war is incredible, especially those which come into port after a long cruise —say from five to seven hundred.

On the morning following the arrival of the frigate, the prisoners were piped up with the command, from the deep growl of the boatswain, to bear a hand, and go on board of the prison-ship. "Ah!" said one, "we have found favor and will make a visit to his Britannic Majesty's ship, so as to be back time enough for dinner."

"I would sooner take the dinner without the visit, if it's all the same to the skipper; for I am sharp set enough now to eat the head from a nine inch bolt, without spice or salt," said another. "For one, my appetite is sufficiently sharp, and do n't need any whetting up by this visit."

"And so is mine," cried another; "for since yesterday I have tasted nothing but a thimble full of pea soup, not enough to say whether it was victuals or physic."

"Physic me into a figure-head, to lap cold spray, but I would rather go on board of the prison-ship, than to stay here in this dog's hole we are forced to sleep in."

"Aye, and that would I too, Jack; for here one breaks his fast less often than he does one of the ten commandments, and at this rate, when shall we receive absolution?"

"If fasting brings holiness, I have been free from sin, since twelve of yesterday, for since then I have not broken it; but it's a severe way of proving one's reformation."

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"Yes, I'm blessed if it is n't, for I have tried it, and find the cure worse than the ailment."

"And," said one who had not before spoken, "if I am not blessedly mistaken, you will not break your fast again, unless you take a slice from your shoe heel; for depend upon it, this early going on board of the prison-ship, before breakfast, means nothing more nor less, than to content yourself until the grub is served out for dinner."

So it proved; for in less than thirty minutes after they were called, the prisoners were tumbling over the side of the ship, bag and baggage, into a launch prepared for the purpose. Each sixth man, as he passed the gangway, had thrust into his hands or pockets the mess rations for the day, of hard biscuit and raw salt beef, dripping from the briny tub, out of which it was but just taken, and transferred to the crew, who could make no use of it.

The distance from the frigate to the prison-ship was about two miles, and while rowing up the harbor, Plymouth and its environs, with an immense number of men-of-war of every description, presented to the eye as well as to the mind, a most delightful contrast, when compared to the miserable treatment and confinement of the frigate. The boats passed close under the stern of Lord Nelson's one hundred and ten gun ship, Victory, on the deck of which he received his mortal wound during the battle of Trafalgar. There were also many others, whose names had become renowned in the history of naval warfare. It was not difficult to per-

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ceive the ships or hulks that were appropriated for the reception of prisoners of war. Several of these were at a distance from the ships in commission, and could easily be designated from the rest, as they were entirely dismantled, being without spars, armament, &c., and fitted up as temporary residences, for the incarceration of prisoners. The one in which these were destined to enter could not be mistaken, from the fact that numbers of American prisoners were crowded on her upper deck, ready to receive the unfortunate beings who had fallen into British captivity; but, in confirmation of the old adage, "misery loves company," they were welcomed on board with many smiles and greetings, the whole of them being under the firmest conviction that they would soon be exchanged, and their *durance vile* be of short duration.

The reception of the prisoners on board of this hulk, which had formerly been a line of battle ship, and one which had composed a part of St. Vincent's fleet, and from her great age had been long out of commission, was marked with much show, in order to impress the prisoners with the great precaution they would observe, to secure these victims in their future confinement. Files of soldiers were placed at each side of the gangway, and as each man passed up, he was critically examined by several naval officers, in order to ascertain if there were Englishmen among them. Several were scrutinized with the utmost rigor, among whom were our two heroes, the boatswain and young seaman. They were decidedly the best looking

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men among the whole crew; their whole exterior commanded the admiration and respect, even of the naval examiners; but they were so well secured by their American passports and protections, that although unwillingly, yet they were compelled to let them pass on. The name of each man was taken, and recorded in a book, and it was said that the number of prisoners on board, now amounted to nearly five hundred.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

MARCH TO STAPLETON, &c.

THREE weeks had scarcely elapsed since the confinement of the crew, when the captured American prisoners poured in in such great numbers, that it was impossible for them to remain at Plymouth on board of these hulks. Orders were therefore issued to send four drafts, of a hundred men each, to the depot for prisoners at Stapleton, near Bristol. The prisoners received this intelligence with a degree of satisfaction, because of their uncomfortable situation, being crowded in such great numbers on board of this ship. This feeling, however, was mixed up with much gloom and despondency, because they began to suspect that the prospect of exchange was less probable than if they were to remain at Plymouth; nor were their fears exaggerated, for there were at this time many American seamen who had given themselves up from British men-of-war. Of course these would be exchanged before others who had been captured in battle. Add to this that there was but little care taken of British subjects by the American government when captured by American

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cruisers, so that there would be but few comparatively to exchange.

The time having arrived, the first draft, in which was contained the whole of the seamen and petty officers of the Cruiser, was landed at Plymouth Dock, where there was an escort consisting of one hundred soldiers of the infantry and fifty mounted dragoons; the latter were a part of that noble regiment of Scotch Greys, which subsequently so highly distinguished itself in the war of the Peninsula.

The commander of this escort, a man of about five and thirty, was of noble birth, and had been promoted to the rank of colonel for his bravery, of which he bore honorable marks, having many wounds, some of which were visible. This officer was in every respect opposite in his character to the Captain and first lieutenant of the frigate. He was manly, generous, and humane, and sought by every means in his power, (so far as his duty and obligation permitted), to alleviate the miseries and sufferings of the prisoners; of this, however, we shall have occasion presently to speak more fully.

The troops were drawn up in quadrangular form, the American prisoners were in the centre, the infantry forming the line on each side, while the dragoons were in the van and rear, and the whole train of baggage wagons followed at a distance of not more than three hundred yards.

In one hour from the time of landing, the escort moved slowly on, being scarcely able to make any way through

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the thronging multitude — some of whom were lavish in their execration, others exulted, while not a few exhibited signs of the greatest surprise and astonishment, when they saw that the American prisoners were like civilized beings or Christian men, for they supposed that all Americans were like wild Indians. There were many, however, who expressed much sympathy, by giving utterance to their feelings in lamentations and cries.

"Ah!" says an old woman, "but it's a pity that the likes o' ye, such brave lads, should be driven along like a parcel o' cattle by these murthering solgers."

"Look there!" cries another, "isn't it the same lingo that we spake?"

"And ar'nt they the same as us, sure?" says an Irishman; "it is not Patrick O'Rourke that would be after meddling wid such a dirty business as this."

"Here, God bless ye," cried an old woman, (as she approached the young seaman endeavoring to force a shilling into his hand) "ye put me in mind of my own dear son, the Lord love him, for ye are enough alike to be own dear brothers."

These and many other sallies from the multitude, gave a strong expression of feeling and sympathy, and in short the escort were so much thronged, that the commanding officer was obliged to give orders for the multitude to retire far in the rear of the American prisoners.

Seamen of all men are less able to perform the labor of a long march; the reason assigned for this may be

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that their peculiar vocation demands less of this exercise, than that of any other pursuit; indeed they have little or no opportunity for this kind of exertion, for the greater part of their life is spent on the ocean, and their rambles are confined to an exceedingly narrow space, say the length and breadth of a ship's main-deck and forecastle, which ordinarily does not exceed eighty by thirty feet; and although the frames of many seamen are almost impervious to the hardships and privations of a sea life, yet they are capable of less endurance on the march than almost the weakest landsman.

The escort had scarcely reached the distance of two leagues, when some of the prisoners began to shew signs of fatigue; and before they had accomplished an additional league, many of them, from their great fatigue and soreness of feet, actually broke down and could go no farther. The Commander, with that humanity which characterized his noble spirit, ordered all such as had given out to be placed in the baggage wagons; and the dragoons he obliged to dismount and walk, and allow the officers who were in the least tired, to take their places in their saddles. In this way then they proceeded on the first day's march. No circumstance that could mitigate in the least the unfortunate condition of the prisoners, was omitted by this humane and generous officer. A few miles previous to the intended halt for the night, the Commander sent for all the officers among the American prisoners, and it may be well to add that the boatswain and young seaman

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were of that number. After they had all collected together, he addressed them to the following effect:

"I have sent for you," said the gentleman, "wishing to make your time while under my command as pleasant as the nature of the circumstances will admit. Now if you will each pledge me your word, that during this march you will not make your escape, or endeavor to do so, then I will promise you on my part that you shall at my expense, not only live upon the best the country affords, but every one of you shall have comfortable bed and lodging provided, at the conclusion of each day's march."

This request appeared so reasonable, and for the faithful performance of it so much was implied, that without the least hesitation, the required promise was unanimously given; and thus the officers had now bound themselves by their word of honor not to make any effort to escape — which by the way was a very short-sighted movement on their part, especially as so many opportunities were presented before their arrival at Stapleton prison, to make their escape. The compact on the part of the Commander was faithfully performed, for immediately after the arrangement, he despatched a dragoon to the town at which they intended to remain for the night. In this place every thing was secured necessary for the comfort of the prisoners, and after a weary and tiresome march of six leagues, they arrived at the halting place, at four o'clock in the afternoon. The officers were then called by name, and introduced to a fine hotel, where they found a sumptu-

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ous repast in readiness for their reception, the Commander himself making one of the company, avowing his determination to do the honors of the table. We shall leave this company for the present to discuss the merits of the dinner and wine, and look after the remainder of the prisoners.

In the first place, a large and spacious barn, well filled with straw, was taken for their accommodations for the night; after which a plentiful and solid dinner of beef, soup, and vegetables, was provided, to their no small gratification; and if the little musician was astonished and confounded at the rapid demolition of the eatables at the supper previous to the departure of the Cruiser, he had abundantly more reason on this occasion, for the appetites of the seamen had not been entirely satisfied since their capture until now, and as a matter of course they felt but little delicacy in making up for former deficiencies. Now the admirable tack of the Commander in reconciling the prisoners to their situation, had not only driven all thoughts from their minds to desert, but they actually exhibited a degree of cheerfulness which had been quite unusual since their confinement. And as Jimmy had always his resources at hand to drive away melancholy, he on this occasion fifed and sung to the great amusement and gratification of the company, till, tired and worn out with the fatigues of the day, by unanimous consent, they fell into a deep and sound repose. Not so with the officers and the Commander of the escort at the hotel; for they not only enjoyed a sumptuous meal, but had also

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partaken liberally of the wine, and its effects were abundantly manifest by the uproar of songs, toasts, and frequent sallies of wit and merriment; and the British Commander was not only more frequent in his potations, but in the whole affair he bore a most conspicuous part. It may then be seen with what facility the American officers could have effected their liberty. Here lay the commanding officer, his senses entirely stupefied with the intoxicating draught, and one solitary sentinel guarding the door; but he had drunk so largely of the same spirit with his master, that neither of them presented the least resistance; and yet the sacredness of the pledge of the American prisoners was more formidable on this occasion than bolts, bars, locks, and even military force, for not one of that party made any effort to get free from this bondage. This day, then, may be considered a fair specimen of the usuage and treatment of the succeeding six days' march, except that in each day the distance was increased.

On the seventh day, the whole escort reached the famous city of Bristol. This being one of the larger seaports of Great Britain, there had been much intercourse with the Americans previous to the war, so that the appearance of American prisoners did not create so much wonder and astonishment as had been expressed by the people in the various towns through which they had passed; indeed, through whatever streets the escort had occasion to pass, there was a universal burst of sympathetic feeling, pity, and commiseration; and no

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wonder, for the jaded appearance of the prisoners after this long and fatiguing march, presented a most melancholy picture of the calamity of war, especially between two nations that bear so close an affinity to each other in language and habits. The town of Stapleton lies north-east of Bristol, about seven miles distant. The depot, or prisons, are situated at its outer edge, and half a league apart from its inhabitants; thither the whole escort bent their way, followed by a number of the inhabitants, each eager to bestow some little act of kindness to commiserate the condition or situation of the prisoners.

Toward the close of the day, the long-looked-for and now desirable place of rest, the prisons, hove in sight. And as the sun was setting, the Americans entered the depot at Stapleton, amid the greetings and acclamations of three thousand French prisoners; and as they had information previous to their arrival, each man had assigned to him a berth to mess in, as well as a situation to swing his hammock.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISONS, FRENCH PRISONERS, &c.

THE morning after the arrival of the prisoners, was one of those clear, bland days, which are frequent in the Island of Great Britain, at this season of the year. The moderate elevation of the prisons, commanded a most delightful view of the country for many miles around. In a direct line fronting upon the west side, was situated the magnificent and vast palace and grounds of the Duke of Devonshire. Here the eye may range over the vast fields and lawns, which are laid out in all the beauty and variety of the most consummate skill and taste. On the one side, in the background, is an extensive park, in which there are numerous deer, and on the other an extensive pond or lake of water, each of which is calculated to afford amusement and pleasure, for the hunter, or for those who are more gratified with fishing. In short, with the beautiful prospect over which the eye might feast and range on all sides of this depot, the mind could often be relieved from that apathetic dulness, the result of long confinement, and the absence of intercourse with the world without. This depot was formed into a square,

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surrounded on all sides with a wall ten feet in height, the summit of which was sufficiently broad to plant cannon at convenient distances, so as to command every prison; on the top of these walls were sentinels, and on the outside there was a ditch about fifteen or twenty feet broad; in the centre were three prisons, the west ends of which all verged to a compass of about a hundred feet, facing the buildings on the outside, which were appropriated for the hospital, marine barracks, officers' dwellings, and turnkeys' residences. The prisons were about a hundred and fifty feet in length, two stories high, and strongly built of stone, in which were windows secured with heavy iron gratings.

The interior of these prisons, above and below, was divided on either side by a space of ten feet each, in the centre of which, there was a space or aisle, which might be six feet wide, and this extended through the whole length of the prison. On either side of these spaces, at convenient distances, were firmly secured perpendicularly, heavy pieces of scantling, on the top of which, parallel to the whole extent of the prison, were pieces of the same, morticed, which formed a strong frame appropriated for the prisoners, on which to swing their hammocks. A heavy flight of rudely cut stone steps, led up into the second apartment, which was in all respects similar to the one below; above this, the French prisoners had managed to form another floor, and had divided it off into different apartments, appropriating them to the different branches of the mechanical arts.

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The prison yard was one thousand feet in length, and from three to four hundred in breadth. Here were small buildings interspersed in every section of the yard, among which were seven billiard tables neatly secured from the weather; the prisons were also well supplied with an abundance of pure fresh water, and the country around afforded every thing to satisfy the appetite and gratify the taste, provided one had the needful with which to purchase; for the French prisoners had obtained the privilege of two market days in each week, on which occasions the country people flock in great numbers, in order to buy, sell and exchange their commodities with the prisoners; in short, every facility was given for the comfort and happiness of this community, so far as they could enjoy it, stripped, as they were, of their liberty and freedom. The contrast of dispositions between the American and French prisoners, was truly surprising, for the Americans were ever restless, ever planning means for their escape, and, as a matter of course, they spent what little means they had in possession, and not being able or willing to settle upon any employment, they soon became miserably poor, usually resorting to the gambling table, to procure, if possible, a relief from their distresses; and this unfortunately was the case with a great majority of the Americans. It is true, for some time after their incarceration, they expected to be exchanged; but as soon as this hope was cut off, instead of applying themselves to some pursuit, which would afford them at least a sufficiency with their prison allowance to live upon, they

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gave themselves up to habits of the basest indolence and recklessness, consequently they were discarded by those Frenchmen, who would have gladly taught them in a branch of business adequate for their support.

Not so, however, with the French prisoners, for long confinement, with their peculiar temperament, had reconciled them to their lot; so that the whole interior as well as exterior of the prisons, and prison-yards, and its inmates, presented a most thriving and flourishing community. Every thing was reduced to system: here was a constitution, laws, penalties, regular courts of judicature, judges, lawyers, inferior officers, &c.; the laws were duly respected, and every breach and violation of the same, was adjudged and punished according to its flagrancy; the rights of property and the social compact were rigidly observed; in short, whatever would promote the well being, security and happiness of this community, in regard to the wholesome laws and the manner of their being carried into effect, seemed an imperious obligation, to which all strenuously adhered.

But there was another point, which added much to the comfort and happiness of this society. Perhaps in the same amount of population, in any other section of the community, on the Island of Great Britain, there could not be found the same number of men without having paupers among them; here, however, was an exception, and this was the more surprising, because no coercion compelled them to labor; however, the larger majority would on no account support any one in idle-

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ness, and therefore industry became a matter of necessity as well as obligation; for the declaration of the Apostle was here literally fulfilled, "He that will not work shall not eat." Perhaps there could not have been found in any community of the same amount of population, a greater number of the different branches of mechanics, or a greater display of ingenuity, than among this people; indeed there was as much regularity and system, with the mechanics and the various branches of manufactures and trade, as can well be imagined; and in their sales and purchases, they not only had an eye to the present means of subsistence, but it seemed to be one object among them generally, to lay up in store, or in common parlance, to hoard up money. This may appear strange; nevertheless, they are facts which cannot be disproved, for when peace took place between France and England, and the French prisoners were sent home, there were not a few of them who had accumulated from five hundred to two thousand guineas in cash, which they actually had made by their industry, while in prison, and carried it away to France. The general mode of operations in these prisons was, by a unanimous law among themselves, to rise at a certain hour, very early, in the morning, and as they were divided into messes of six, each mess cleansed and purified its own location, as well as lashed up the bedding in the hammocks. They had also a certain time for breakfast, an arrangement with which the keepers of the prison never meddled or interfered. Immediately after this operation, the hammocks and

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bedding were all taken out of the prisons, and stowed away in a small building in the yard appropriated for that purpose. The prisoners were then obliged to leave the prison, after which they were inspected by the officers who had the management of them; this operation was performed in a very short time, after which the prisons were thrown open, and every man entered upon his peculiar avocation, with as much regularity as might be witnessed in the world without. Different locations were assigned for the different branches of mechanics; in one part of the prison you might have seen from thirty to fifty sail-makers, all employed; in another as many shoemakers; here, also, might be seen different branches of manufactures, such as lace, straw, musical instruments, many specimens of the most beautiful work manufactured from the bones of the beef which was there consumed, such as vessels of every description, toys, and many curious imitations of fairs, so constructed by machinery, that every thing connected with them had its own peculiar movement, so that all were in operation at the same time. Here also were schools, in which were taught all the different branches of education, as well as the polite accomplishments, such as music, dancing, fencing, &c. In the various buildings that were interspersed in every part of the prison-yard, the heavier branches of mechanics were carried on, such as, carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, hatters, &c. Some of these were used for hotels, coffee shops, eating houses, — in short, not only the more substantial eatables, but

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also all the luxuries of life, could here be obtained, provided the needful was forthcoming.

Every species of amusement, for recreation to the mind, as well as to the body, might here be enjoyed, and oftentimes proved a source of relief, driving away those feelings of sorrow and melancholy induced by long confinement. There were not a few of these Frenchmen, whose bondage had already extended from five to ten years, and many of them had become so completely reconciled and satisfied with their lot, that when peace was proclaimed, they would have preferred to remain at Stapleton, rather than go home to France. This, however, was not a matter of astonishment, because many of them had been captured when quite young, consequently all their associations were formed within the walls of the prison, and they were entirely ignorant of the ways of the world without: there were not a few of them, whose recollections in regard to their own country had become nearly obliterated; add to this, they were homeless, and friendless, consequently when they had their freedom, as a matter of necessity they would be obliged to form other associations, and commence the world entirely anew.

While therefore their hours of confinement passed away, I may almost say happily, they never thought of concerting any plans for their escape; and so well satisfied were the British officers of the depot in regard to the general deportment and behavior of the Frenchmen, that every privilege was granted them that could in any way ameliorate their captivity.

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Not so, however, with the American prisoners; for they were debarred many privileges, in consequence of their recklessness and the almost constant state of restlessness manifested in their conduct, which caused much trouble, in the prisons among themselves, and with the French prisoners; while also their untiring efforts to escape procured for them, not only the displeasure of the British officers, but also, frequently, severe punishment. It is true they could not be blamed for making the strongest efforts to regain their freedom, but this was often attempted without the least shadow of success; consequently these attempts had the effect of riveting the chains of bondage more securely, and it became next to impossible, after a lapse of two or three months, to escape, because of the redoubled vigilance of the guard. The amount of suffering endured by the Americans was almost incredible. Such was their improvidence, indolence, and other bad habits (for many of these men were picked up from the most wretched haunts of misery and dissipation) that when cold weather set in (for it will be recollected that the winter of 1818 in England was exceedingly severe, insomuch that the river Thames was frozen so thick that heavy burdens were driven over it,) they presented a most melancholy picture of poverty, distress, and want; for they had neither money nor clothing, and the prison allowance of food was not sufficient to subsist upon. In this state of things many of them sickened, and were thrown into the hospital, where they ended their bondage and suffering. It must not be under-

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stood, however, that this state of things was universal among the American prisoners; there were many honorable exceptions, and many who would have been respected in any society or community; and but for the example and influence of these, the condition of the remainder would have been infinitely worse. The length of the captivity, however, in some measure cured the great evil consequent upon the bad habits of the Americans; for when they became in want of food for their subsistence, and found they could not obtain it, then, and not until then, they went to work at some employment or business. In this way, without any material difference, the French and American prisoners continued to pass their time during a course of nine months, at the expiration of which hostilities ceased between France and England, and the French prisoners were sent home.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE TRANSFER TO DARTMOOR PRISON.

After the French prisoners had all been released and sent to France, the British Government not being willing, as was supposed, to keep up the expense of this depot, determined to concentrate all the American prisoners that were in England, at Dartmoor; so that very shortly after the release of the Frenchmen, orders were issued to the Americans to hold themselves in readiness for a march to that place; this intelligence was hailed with much delight by many who had determined to escape at the risk of their lives; while others received it not so pleasantly as might have been expected. However, they were aware of the great difference between the two locations; at Stapleton every facility could be had for comfort so far as could be expected in captivity, and at the same time it was perhaps the most healthy spot in England. Now, on the other hand, Dartmoor was exactly opposite in every particular; nevertheless, a change seemed to afford the prisoners some satisfaction, although they were confident it would be for the worse.

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The time now arrived when the first draft was called out to take up the line of march; and the escort was in all respects, in point of strength and number, the same as that described from Stapleton, with the same number of prisoners. They were also transferred in the same order — the draft which arrived first at Stapleton was the first sent to Dartmoor, which consequently brought together the seamen and officers of the Cruiser. The march, however, was materially different from the former, for the commander of the escort was a full-blooded Englishman in all his notions, feelings, and prejudices; and as a matter of course, was not very well disposed towards the Yankees. With this man there were no distinctions, for the officers and sailors fared equally alike; the milk of human kindness formed no part of his composition; in fact every thing that was manly, noble, generous, and humane, were wanting. The absence of these, however, was abundantly supplied by the opposite qualities, which were exercised upon all occasions. Of course this march was attended with great hardship and suffering, for every privilege was cut off, even that of purchasing food, and the allowance was not at all sufficient to sustain men on a fatiguing march.

On the third day the whole escort was thrown into the greatest confusion, from the circumstance of three prisoners having deserted from a barn where they had been confined the previous night; nothing could exceed the exasperation of the Commander on this occasion. A strong guard of soldiers was remanded back to the town, where unfortunately they succeeded in

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taking one of the prisoners, the other two having made their escape. After this an increased vigilance was kept up, and every indignity was heaped upon the prisoners until their arrival at Dartmoor.

The thoughts of going to a prison, especially such an one as that to which they were now destined, could not be agreeable under any circumstances, yet such were the sufferings and misery which this draft had to endure, under their inhuman and despotic leaders, that even Dartmoor, with all its horrors, was preferable to the endurance of such treatment; and it was with no little joy and satisfaction that these wretched beings came in sight of this depot.

It was early in the afternoon, on the eighth day, when the massive bolts, bars, and locks of the neavy iron gates were thrown open by the turnkeys, and the prisoners in single file entered, and the ponderous door of bars and rivets was slammed in their rear with a hollow sepulchral sound, that was only equalled in dolefulness by the harsh grating of the keys and the snapping of the bolts as they shot into their deep sunken sockets in the granite jams.

As soon as the prisoners had entered the first gate, the clerk was in readiness, and proceeded to record the names, ages, height, complexion, trades or employments, and birth places, which were noted down opposite to their names. After each had thus been registered, a hammock-bed and blanket were given to them, to be returned when released.

The prisoners now took up their line of march for

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their several locations in the prisons; but on their entrance to the prison yard, they came to a sudden halt, being struck with amazement and wonder at what they now saw and heard. Here was a group of human beings, fantastically dressed, and at a short distance was another engaged in every species of gambling, while another party, more numerous than the rest, were amusing themselves in the polite accomplishment of pugilism; in short, they were all so much engaged, that they took but little notice of the strangers who had just entered, and who were destined to become members of this respectable community.

The prisoners moved on toward one of these respectable habitations, and upon entering the first floor they stood at the upper end of the building, which was all thrown into one apartment of not less than two hundred and fifty feet in length by sixty in breadth, each part thickly peopled with human beings of every possible shape, dress and occupation. Some were cooking, some were reading, some were walking, dancing, singing, fiddling, and fifing; but more were gambling, or clustering around tables on which were piled heaps of all colors and value. There they stood, and knew not which way to go, as all places seemed alike occupied and even closely jammed,—no one portion of the room offering space for the stowage of their bodies or bedding. But they were soon relieved from this awkward dilemma, for information was received from one of the older inhabitants that there was plenty of spare room in number seven prison. Upon receiving this welcome intelligence,

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they quickly transferred themselves and dunnage to their new residence, and found no difficulty in obtaining berths, for more than one half of this building was yet unoccupied.

In contemplating the miseries of war, and especially the sufferings and privations of those who are brought under captivity, one would naturally expect to see nothing but misery and wo from the time of entering the prison till liberated therefrom. It might be fairly inferred, then, by those who are unacquainted, that hunger and crime stalked uncontrolled, that the weak were at the mercy of the strong, or that nought was here but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. None, or but few, appeared cast down; and while one seemed to strive how he could show more mirth than those around him who were listening to his nonsense, another was at his books, music, mending his garments, or making a party of cards, draughts, or other games of amusement; a third was at his stall with his scanty stock of goods, busily waiting on his customers. At eight o'clock the next morning, after the entrance of the draft, the prisoners were notified to be in readiness to count out in messes. As each number of six were allowed their choice of companions, they then passed out by a door left open for the purpose, and to every sixth man was given a numbered ticket, indicative of the number of his mess. Of course each party of six were in close connection, and before being counted out, had formed the association. There were many who would not become members of any mess voluntarily, on

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account of their ill-conduct and rowdyism; and when all others had passed out, it mattered little to them who were their companions; they went out indiscriminately till the whole were ticketed. These latter were denominated "Rough Allies." If any through carelessness, contrariness, or any other cause, remained inside till the "messing out" was finished, he received no rations, only as a pauper, or by a friend sharing with him till the next counting out, which was as often as any new prisoner came in, or any number went to, or returned from the hospital. The oftener the "messing out" was ordered, the greater harmony there was with the whole; for whoever became unruly, filthy in person, or any wise obnoxious, was thrust out, and could mess with none others but his like—the "Rough Allies."

Directly after the whole had received their tickets, the cook's horn gave notice that the bread was in readiness to be served out; when the one from each mess who received the ticket at the door, being dubbed cook for the day, proceeded to the cook house, and there waited till his number was called. The calling began at the low numbers, and proceeded in regular rotation to the highest; the cook received the ticket as he delivered the bread to the holder, strung it upon a wire, and so on in succession until all were gone through. At the next serving out of either bread or soup, the cook of the mess received his ticket, together with the provisions for the day, the numbers being now called from the highest to the lowest. Each member of the

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different messes took his regular day as its cook, as often as it fell to his turn.

The condition of the American prisoners in Dartmoor, at the time of which we now write, was in many respects truly deplorable; a large majority of them had been gathered from the vilest haunts of dissipation and vice, from perhaps all the seaports in the United States. They were uneducated, and their habits of the worst character; they had no just or proper conception of the rights of their fellow men, and their actions were in accordance with these views; and they vainly supposed, because forsooth they were on an equality as prisoners of war, that this state of things should be carried out in every particular. Improvident and idle, without any resources in themselves, they had constant recourse to the gaming table, for the two-fold purpose of gain and whiling away the time. They were, however, sadly mistaken in the former; for their passion for this execrable vice became so strong that they lost all their means, clothing, &c., and many of them were classed under the genteel appellation of "Rough Allies," and were reduced to the lowest state of degradation and want. Indeed, it was a melancholy sight, to behold these men gathering from the piles of offal and dirt, cabbage stumps, potato and turnip skins, which they devoured with the greediness of a vulture, to satisfy their craving appetites, and to prevent starvation; for it will be remembered that up to this time the American Government had made no provision for the American prisoners in England; and the food allowed by the British Gov-

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ernment was not sufficient for the subsistence of men in health. The result was, therefore, that many of them either starved to death or died by gorging themselves with unwholesome food. But the worst consequences resulting to the better class of the prisoners were these: a large body of these miserable men usually banded together, and if they had a pique against any of the more orderly, it was their custom to drag them up to the whipping post and scourge their backs most unmercifully; this was invariably done to all such officers as had been good disciplinarians on board their vessels. This course of proceeding at length became so outrageous and intolerable, that the captain of the depot had frequently to send in a guard of soldiers and rescue the unfortunate victims of their vengeance from their brutality and oppression. It was fortunate, however, that this state of things was soon effectually stopped, for about this time six drafts of American seamen, who had given themselves up from British men-of-war, were transferred from Chatham to this depot. These were a fine set of orderly, well-behaved men, and would have been a credit to any nation. After they arrived, the more respectable portion of the prisoners, and these, united together and instituted many wholesome regulations, which not only checked these outrages, but also established law and order throughout the community within the walls of the prison.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

DESCRIPTION OF DARTMOOR PRISON

In attempting to give a description of this depot, I have been mainly guided, not only by my own recollection (which may be fallacious) but also from what I have gleaned from a work which I conceive to be near the truth, and more correct than either my own views or numerous other descriptions which have come under my notice. In regard to myself, I had no other opportunity of ascertaining distances but by stepping off, nor any other mode of fixing heights or measurements except by comparison. All summings up from such sources and materials, must unavoidably be defective. Yet I trust the following is not so far from correct as not to answer the purpose for which it is intended, and probably as near the truth as the generality of topographical descriptions that are set down as accurately drawn. Dartmoor, when applied to the prisons, is erroneous, for it is the name of the district in which the prisons are situated. "The Heaths of Dartmoor" are the plains that surround the buildings of the depot to a great distance. As well might one in writing of the Capitol at Washington, call it Washington, or the

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District of Columbia, and be no further incorrect than when calling these prisons Dartmoor.

A traveller may visit Dartmoor, and yet not go within ten or twelve miles of the depot where the Americans were confined during the latter part of the last war. All letters which came to the prisoners, were directed to the depot at "Dartmoor," as were the numerous blanks at the clerks' and doctors' offices, headed in the same manner. The wagons, carts, and other property belonging to this station, were branded as above. None of the inhabitants of the surrounding district spoke of the prisons except as "the Depot."

The view from the prisons was uninterrupted in every direction except the south; here it was broken by a high hill, from which, it was said, the numerous streams of water took their rise, which supplied the depot so plentifully at all seasons of the year. This water, which was soft and agreeable to the taste, had a slight reddish tinge, caused by having passed through veins of copper ore imbedded near its source, and had the reputation of being insalubrious to those unaccustomed to its use; but afterwards none complained of its baneful effects. There is one account which says, "the water is brought from a great distance and at great expense, to the Depot," but does not say from whence it was brought, but evidently it is meant from beyond this hill, as it lies but a short way off, and the ground is at a gentle declivity and favorably situated to convey water at but little expense, the whole distance to the depot.

All the buildings of the depot, prisons, barracks, hos-

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pital, store houses, dwellings, and out-houses, were alike surrounded by two circular walls, one within the other, of stone masonry, of from fifteen to eighteen feet in height. These were distant from each other about twenty-five feet, and the space between the two was used as a military walk, and likewise served as a place from which the prisoners could be watched without seeing who were their observers. Inside the wall was an iron picket carried around the circle, which stood about thirty feet apart from the wall. The space between the two was well sodded, and as the spring advanced, a luxuriant covering of green sprung up, which added much life to the scene, and threw a cheering aspect on the surrounding sombreness, besides forming a lively contrast to the monotonous, dull, and heavy appearance of the stone buildings. The outer wall measured a full mile in its circular stretch around the enclosure. This circle was cut by a cross wall of the same height and material as the two outside ones, which gave one half of the space for the use of the prison buildings, while the other half was occupied by the barracks, hospital, store houses, and dwellings for the keepers; all, however, surrounded by the same strong barriers as were those which the Americans occupied; and when the gates were closed the whole population within the walls were alike prisoners, or rather those whose duty it was to prevent the captives from escaping would find it as difficult to gain their liberty, if the attempt was made, without the consent

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of him who had charge of the main gate, as would the prisoners.

The prisons were seven in all, diverging from a common centre, known by the numbers beginning at the left, from the entrance at the main gate, with No. 1, and ending at the right with No. 7, the two extremities being parallel with the cross wall, and the whole radiating like the spokes from the hub of a wheel, their extremities forming a half circle. The centre of the seven, No. 4, was walled off from the others, thus making in all three yards distinct from each other, known as yard No. 1, containing prisons No. 1, 2, and 3; yard No. 4, by itself, containing prison No. 4; and yard No. 7, containing Nos. 5, 6, and 7. The communication was kept up between these yards, by a passage at the centre of the circle, of thirty feet in width by one hundred and fifty in length, covered, and the top made use of as a military walk; from which the movements of those within the enclosure could be seen, not only the prisoners, but all who were inside the circular wall, whether in the hospital yard, that occupied by the barracks, store houses, or market, the whole could be seen at a single turn from this platform.

In the front of this platform was the market square, which was separated from the broad passage beneath it by a tremendous strong wrought iron railing, of about twelve feet in height, supported at proper distances from each other by granite posts of more than two feet square, firmly planted in the ground.

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The communication from yard to yard and from prison to prison, was free and uninterrupted during the day; but at sunset, the prisoners were notified by the blowing of the turnkey's horn from the top of the military walk, that they must withdraw from the yards, and retire to their respective numbers, therein to remain till sunrise the following morning, when the doors were again thrown open, as were the different gates which had been closed during the night, for the inmates to range the yards or buildings to their liking. The yards were well paved, lighted at night, swept and scraped as often as was necessary for either health or appearance; and they were likewise well supplied with water, by each having two handsomely stoned canals, of about three feet in width, and the same in depth, carried through them, both running with a never failing supply, the one carrying off the filth of the sewers, by its rapid current, while the other served for washing and culinary. This latter emptied into a stone basin of twenty by forty feet, of an elliptic form, which could be filled at any time, and was of sufficient depth for bathing. The prison buildings varied in nothing except their size; Nos. 1, 4, and 7, were the largest; Nos. 3 and 5, the next in size, and Nos. 2 and 6, (unoccupied,) the smallest. The walls were built of irregular shaped, unhammered stone, and were more than two feet in thickness; the buildings were two stories in height, with a cock-loft or attic. No. 5 was above two hundred and fifty or sixty feet in length, by sixty or sixty-five in breadth. Each story was without any partitions, but

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had two alleys, twelve feet in width, running the whole length, with upright stanchions, eighteen or twenty inches apart, to separate them from the berth places of the men. The floors were paved throughout with common flag, or rubble stone. Each building was well ventilated by windows, heavily grated with iron bars.

The communication from story to story was by a double flight of broad stairs of hewn stone, at both ends of each apartment. There were no chimneys in any of the prisons, nor fires, except for private use; and these belonged to those who could afford a small stove, running the pipe out of the many windows in the side walls. The owners of these stoves carried on some business which required the use of fire; and they were much more numerous than agreeable to those who disliked the gas arising from burning the bituminous coal necessary to keep them in operation. Each prison had its own cook-house, of the same material that the buildings were built of, and joined the end pointing to the common centre of the circle in which they stood.

The Heaths of Dartmoor are situated at a considerable elevation, but at what height, is not known; however, the great height in which the district is elevated, is alone the cause of the almost uninterrupted continuance of those dense and heavy fogs, with which it is enveloped from November till May. To the same reason must be attributed the coldness of the atmosphere; for in the summer months when the sun is at its altitude, its warming rays are infinitely more to be desired than its shade. These heaths, which surround the depot to

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a great distance, are barren, cheerless, and dreary to behold, even during the most luxuriant portion of the year; but when all was blasted with hoar frost, and deadened by the stern hand of winter, they were doubly drear. For days, even in summer, nothing could be seen, except occasionally a single horseman threading one of the crooked by-paths of the plains, or a flock of sheep vainly endeavoring to nip a scanty meal from the surface of a barren soil that grew nothing except a coarser bramble than they could relish. For full half around the horizon, there was not an object for the eye to rest upon as a landmark — not a fence, a stream, a hillock, nor a tree was between the observer and the distant blue risings which ended his view.

By the small irregular mounds and ridges of raised earth, that were here and there discovered scattered over the plains, with evident signs of great antiquity, it is thought that battles must have been fought on these heaths in ancient times. And so fully were the country people's minds convinced that the departed dead were yet restless, that it was difficult for those rustics to bring their minds to pass this extensive waste after night-fall. Half a mile to the east was the little village of Princeton, composed of ten or fifteen buildings, with a stone Gothic church standing midway between the town and the prisons. This building was put up by the French during the time of their captivity, who after working through the day, returned at dusk to pass the night within the walls.

A little to the left of this village was a small winding

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stream, over which was a stone bridge, where the road crossed that led to the interior. These were the only objects the eye could rest upon, when turned from within the prison enclosure, if we except the smooth surface of rising ground, a short distance to the left of Princeton, which was used as the parade ground for the troops that were doing duty at the depot. It was not unfrequent for a couple of regiments to close their two hours' drill with a sham fight; when as many of the prisoners as could clamber to the roofs of the buildings, enjoyed a fair sight of this harmless but highly picturesque battle, often raging fiercely between the red-coated soldiery, whose gaudily bedizened trappings glittered in the sun's rays, as seen when half enveloped in the smoke of the battalion fire.

These prisons were a complete epitome of an overcrowded city. Here were trades and occupations of every kind carried on — a mixed population, made up from all nations of the earth — and every grade of society as distinctly marked, as in towns and cities. Finally, though it may be considered uncharitable, we do not hesitate to say, that the British government selected out this spot for its dreariness, desolation, and insalubrity of climate, on which to erect a depot for prisoners of war, as a civilized and legal method of putting them out of the way; for I believe it is reduced to a certainty, that there is not another location on the Island of Great Britain, that can equal this in regard to the qualities we have named.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

NEWS OF THE PEACE—CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE BOATSWAIN AND YOUNG SEAMEN.

PERHAPS if the whole mass of American prisoners had been examined by impartial judges, they would have decided, that for correct general deportment, and manly excellence, there were none that surpassed the boatswain and young seaman, of the Cruiser. As they were inseparable friends on the cruise, so they remained since their capture, and during their long captivity. In the long and fatiguing marches, side by side, they were never seen to quail or falter. The iron frame of the boatswain seemed to defy the excessive labor of the march; while the youth and vigor of the young seaman, stimulated by the example of his friend and messmate, was never seen to hang on the trail of the escort. They were both among that number that passed their word to the generous British, that they would not attempt to escape; nor did they, for they were among the unfortunate men that suffered a long and dreary bondage; and yet, the gloom of many of these lonely hours, was mitigated by the mutual efforts of each, according to their peculiar ability and tact. They messed together,

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and swung their hammocks side by side; they labored and united their scanty earnings, for the mutual comfort and subsistence of each other; and when the dark hours of melancholy associations would sometimes cast a deep shade of sorrow over the manly brow of the young seaman, the boatswain would recount some touching incident of his own thrilling history, which would invariably dissipate the cloud, by the interest he felt, in all that concerned his friend; and although, from the peculiar temperament of the boatswain, it would seem that no misfortune or distress could shake his iron nerves, yet from this long and dreary captivity, an attentive observer might trace the lines of despondency on his face, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary.

It was in the month of March, the season of the year, of all others the most gloomy in this district; the barren heath, as well as the spot on which the prisons stood, was shrouded in an almost impenetrable mist; the falling rain splashed heavily on the tops of the prisons, and prison-yard, and the wild wind blew in fitful gusts, with a sound so melancholy, that it seemed to be the harbinger of some dreadful intelligence. The atmosphere was dense and cold, and the prisoners sought shelter within the walls of their habitations, from the ruthless storm. Now and then a loud peal of thunder would seem to shake the massive walls of the prison, while ever and anon, a livid flash of lightning shot through the iron grates of the windows, which for a moment made the stoutest hearts to quail; the pelting storm raged for an hour, with unabating vio-

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lence, and when it ceased its fury, there might have been seen here and there a countenance lighted up with a smile, yet the majority of them, seemed to partake of the gloom that now covered this dreary moor. After the storm had abated, and the minds of the prisoners had become somewhat tranquillized, there might have been seen two men, sitting composedly in one of the mess berths, deeply interested in a book, which the younger of the two was reading aloud, to his most attentive listener; they were so much absorbed, that for some moments they took no notice of the loud and extravagant expressions of joy, which rang throughout the prisons, and all over the prison-yard; nor were they entirely aroused until a loud peal resounded through the air like rolling thunder, in three cheers, from more than three thousand human beings, immediately after which one of the prisoners entered with a newspaper, and read with stentorian lungs, the overwhelming and joyful intelligence, that, "Peace was proclaimed between America and England." Nothing could now exceed the manifestations of joy and transport, exhibited among the prisoners; it is in vain to attempt an expression of the deep and powerful feelings of men, some of whom had been incarcerated in a British prison for more than two years, the greater part of them for at least one year. Some danced, while others sung; many of them broke out into extravagant bursts of laughter, while others actually wept for joy; and there were not a few, that night, that drained the intoxicating bowl of its very dregs.

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"How is it lad," observed the boatswain to the young seaman, "that you don't seem to be much rejoiced at the news of the peace, and what's better, the prospect of your liberty; why I'd just rather bang salt water all my days on board of a line of battle ship, and mess on salt grub and pea soup, than to be couped up in such a place as this, where the curse of God seems to be on the very ground, for d' ye see nature won't do any of her work here; and besides, to be shut out like heathens from the sight of any Christian woman, and never hear the sound of a chaplain's voice to say a prayer for the good of a chap's soul, though for the matter of that we 've prayers enough here, but they are not to my liking; no, no, lad, I don't relish this company, and if I once get clear of them, as I hope to be forgiven they 'll never catch me again."

"I appreciate my liberty," replied the young seaman, as much as you can do, and I hope much more rationally than those who give such wild proofs of their feelings, but as I have often told you, past occurrences in my history have taught me to control my feelings."

"Well, well," replied the boatswain, "I believe you are half right, and now that it is peace, these chaps here are beginning to kick up a row, and I'll miss my reck'ning, if some of them don't lose the number of their mess yet; but come, messmate, as there 's some little prospect of getting out of this, before a great while, how do you mean to shape your course?"

"We have been together three years," replied the

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young seaman, "and I have had no reason thus far to wish for a separation."

"That's just my own mind," observed the other, "but then, d' ye see, I've got no larning, and in my way of thinking, I shall never get higher than serving out the blocks, and spunyarn, and wind a call; but then, lad, you're cut out for something higher, and as I was overhauling my thinking tacks the other day, says I to myself, it's a pity such a tight chap should be boxing about the main-deck and forecastle all his days, when he can handle a ship, aye, and handle a trumpet too, as well as the best on 'em; and then thinks I that you'd do credit to the regular sarvice. Aye, aye, lad, God knows it would go hard with me to part with you, yet this must be done some time or other, and Tom is not the lad to heave a straw in the way of his messmate."

"I have been thinking myself," replied the young seaman, "that the regular service will be the best field for us both, for there it is likely we may continue to be shipmates, if not messmates; but in regard to that, as I am now solitary and alone in the world, I have determined to devote the remainder of my days to the service of my country."

"Come, come," said the boatswain, "don't get on that tack, for the Lord knows you've had mishaps enough, and if you rake 'em up again, why I shall begin to think about holding on to you, but that won't do; so cheer up, and when we must part, if head winds and foul weather cross your hawse, why then your old

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messmate is not the chap to desert his friends, or fill away his maintopsail in the hour of distress, for d' ye see, I've got a few shiners laid up in the Savings, and if we get bamboozled out of our prize-money, which by the way is not unlikely, why then, lad, we 'll just share it together."

The young seaman was nearly overwhelmed with this additional expression of friendship, which unsettled his resolution to separate from his friend, and grasping the hand of the boatswain, he replied:

"We must not separate; the deep wounds that sorrow and affliction have made upon my mind are beginning to heal, and it is owing to the balm of friendship which you have from time to time administered; separate us then, and they will bleed afresh. No! long did I seek for one, in whom I could repose; in you I have found such a one, and have tested the worth and value of your friendship. What then would this world be to me apart from that boon which you have bestowed. Yes, I should be a solitary wanderer upon the sea of life; cheerless and comfortless indeed would be its last hours, were it not for the consoling reflection, that when death shall wind up the history of my woes, I have at least one friend, who will drop a tear to the memory of him whose path in life was strewed with sorrow."

"Come, come," said the boatswain, "the more we chat about these things, the farther off we get about parting, and it's better to cut off this yarn, for I just feel as if my head pumps were going to work; now, in

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my way of thinking, if we are to stick together, why then d' ye see there's one aloft that knows all about it better than we do, and I say if we do sail together, he 'll make the way for it."

"That is the very best conclusion," observed the young seaman, "and here we will let it rest."

The conversation now assumed a different turn.

"I don't understand how it is," observed the boatswain, "that we are kept in prison here on short allowance, and under the domineering sway of that broken down post-captain, Shortland. I 'll miss my reck'ning, if that chap has n't been genteelly banished from the sarvice for his tyranny; aye, aye, he 's just such a chap as the British government well knew would treat the Yankee prisoners as bad as they did them outlandish Frenchmen; but hark 'ee, lad, these English chaps have not got Frenchmen to deal with, for the Yankees some how or other have humbled their pride on the salt water, as well as on the land."

"The English government," replied the young seaman, "are bound to detain the American prisoners, until they are demanded by our agent. It is true that he is very slow in making the necessary provisions for cartels, to convey the prisoners to the United States; but this is in accordance with all his acts, in the agency, for which he is employed by the United States government in reference to the prisoners of war n England. I have understood that in all his operations he is connected with a Jew, and that at this very time, instead of procuring ships, to release the unfortu-

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nate prisoners with as much despatch as possible, they are making it a matter of gain to themselves, when they ought faithfully to attend to the comfort of those men, who have suffered so long in this prison.

"Thus it was when the prisoners were suffering from the scanty allowance of food received from the British government. Letter after letter was sent to him, to make application to our government for an additional supply of provisions, or a monthly stipend, so as to save them from actual starvation; instead, however, of attending to this immediately, as it ought to have been done, it was delayed for months, and the consequence was, as you know, great suffering among the prisoners; and you recollect, they were so much exasperated, that when Mr. B—— came down from London, to inform the prisoners that our government had made arrangements to allow each man seven and sixpence per month, that he dare not come into the prison-yard."

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE MASSACRE — BOATSWAIN'S LEG SHOT OFF.

It now becomes the painful duty of the writer of these pages to record that which he would have willingly been spared, and which calls up associations of the most melancholy nature. The many who have read the history of those times, know there was a massacre of the American prisoners in confinement at Dartmoor; but beyond this, little is known; all is in apparent darkness, without the seeming possibility of the circumstances attending this fatal event, being ever cleared of the obscurity with which they are so mysteriously enshrouded; or, that a full and satisfactory explanation can be given to the public, why these captive Americans were murdered in cold blood. If it is asked why the prisoners at Dartmoor were fired upon? the common answer is, "They were digging out," and the garrison were forced to fire upon them, being justified for the measure by military usage. In my endeavors to bring this horrible affair before the reader, let it not be supposed that I shall entirely clear up that mystery after thirty years. It is presumed that at the time the investigation was going on, and the inquiries were making,

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from the military platform, facing prison-yard No. 7, too little credit was given to what the prisoners said in evidence. It is a fact that cannot be contradicted, the strongest testimony which could be brought forward by the aggrieved, met with as little respect as circumstantial evidence, and far less than the hap-hazard assertions from the side of the aggressors. The prisoners were looked upon, not only by the British officers who were carrying on the investigation, but (with a single exception,) by those who, if possessing any national feelings in common with their countrymen, might be supposed to hear alike both sides, as felons too low in the scale of society to be entitled to the least credit; whether on oath or not, they were all discredited, or heard but not listened to. Surely out of six thousand men, there must have been some who held an oath in reverence; all were not cut-throats and robbers, ready to swear away the life of a fellow mortal, or use the more summary process of the knife. The affidavits on the part of the prisoners went positively to show that Shortland did give the word to fire; while the strongest evidence on the other side only said, "They did not hear him order the soldiers to fire, although the word was given by some one." Who, in a well-regulated corps, would dare give any word of command, except the one that commanded? Yet the official report, which exonerates Shortland from any blame, is based upon the sentence, "No evidence is shown that he gave the word to fire." The circumstances, however, which led to this cruel and bloody outrage may be

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attributed to the malevolent passions and bitter feelings which Shortland had toward the American prisoners; and the following incident afforded him ample scope to wreak his vengeance, and which finally terminated in the massacre.

It appears that an American privateer had captured a British merchant schooner, on board of which she put four men as a crew to work her into port; she was afterwards fallen in with, and captured by a British frigate, who put on board of her a prize-master and crew, and took the Americans on board of the frigate. Shortly after the Englishmen had possession of the schooner, they discovered fire in the hold, when they immediately hailed the frigate, alleging that the Yankees had placed matches among some kegs of powder, with the intention of blowing up the schooner and all on board. The Americans, four in number, the names of whom are as follows, Simeon Hays, of Baltimore, John Miller, Englishman, James Ricker, and Elisha Whitten, of Massachusetts, were immediately put into irons, and under short allowance of provisions, carried into England, when the British authorities ordered them to be kept in confinement during the war They were sent to the prisons at Dartmoor, with instructions to the commandant of the depot, Shortland, to see that the sentence was fully carried into effect. During their confinement, much sympathy was manifested for their sufferings, by those at large in the prisons, and relief given by subscriptions, which was conveyed to them clandestinely, through the agency of

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their kind and generous hearted jailor, Carley, an Irishman, with Irish warmth of feelings for those in distress, who never let an opportunity slip without administering to their comfort, when it was possible to avoid the lynx eyes of his superior, the Commandant, who was determined to carry his orders to the utmost extent of severity. For the first four months they never had a light; but afterwards this man smuggled to them candles regularly, although the detection deprived him of his office. After these men had suffered solitary confinement six months, their sentence was so far mitigated, as to allow them to walk for half an hour each day, by the side of the sentries. Whilst walking, much curiosity was manifested by the other prisoners to see them, which generally called to the gratings, opposite to where the men were walking, a crowd of some two or three hundred. The cachet being situated in the space between the circular picket grating and the inner wall, means were found to communicate with these unfortunates, (for they were allowed conversation with none,) and a plan adopted for one or more of them to escape to the prisons, within the picket fence. But they resolutely refused to come into measures that could in any wise compromise their philanthropic jailor. Sunday, however, he would be absent, as he was a strict church man, and never missed his hour at the morning service. The four men were permitted to walk as heretofore, but they were more closely watched than usual, till their time had nearly expired, when Simeon Hays, after following closely in the footsteps of one of the four sen-

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tries, till the others turned to retrace their steps, in their to and fro marchings, (with their faces opposite to the prisoner,) jumped to the gratings, nimbly reached the top, and threw himself headlong amidst the gathered crowd on the opposite side, escaping the shot with which the sentry from the wall saluted him, as he was making his daring pitch. This occurred the last of February, or the first week in March. The escaped repaired to No. 1 prison; but as means were immediately adopted to have him ferreted out, he was transferred to No. 4, and metamorphosed into a darkey, to correspond with his associate mess. Next morning the doors were all kept closed till the inmates were counted out singly, with the jailor in attendance to identify his lost bird; but none could he see, who at all corresponded with the one he had waited on for the last nine months. After counting out the men singly, perambulating the prisons and yards continually, for some days, and every other means had failed of identifying the man, an order came from the Commandant, peremptorily demanding the prisoners to give up Hays, with a threat that the market should be stopped for the space of ten days. The crier paraded the buildings, beginning with No. 1, and going through them all in regular succession, saying, "Shall the prisoner, Simeon Hays, be given up, to be again sent to the cachet? aye or no!" "No, no! never!" resounded from every quarter; not a voice among the six thousand was heard to respond "Aye."

The threat of Shortland was carried into effect, and

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the market suddenly closed. Thus all within the prisons were deprived of every thing but their bare allowance. In the mean time the jailor was busily peram bulating the yards and searching the prisons, doing his best to gain his lost reputation, by securing the man who had escaped from his charge, while he was away from his post. The hour he was spending in devotional piety was no excuse in the eyes of Captain Shortland for what occurred during his absence. From a cause not known, but it was supposed some one had given the information with the hope of gaining the offered reward, (had the informant been found out, his expected reward would have done him but little good,) the fugitive was traced to No. 5, whose numbers were again counted out, with as little effect towards his recognition as when he was under the covering of the cook's smut in No. 4. Here he passed all the grades of coloring from that of his own skin to the tanny red of the Indian, which, under the atmosphere of the dangerous territories he was in, was soon again darkened to the blackamoor of the African wilds. His dress was, also, as changeable as his skin ; for what was becoming as a morning suit, was not fashionable for a dinner full dress, and that again had to give place to the fanciful rug suit of some waggish handicraftsman, making the wearer a very scaramouch, beyond the penetrating eyes of the jailor or his hard hearted senior in command, (who, in their passage, were often jostled by the acting clown, with a facetious salutation peculiar to his nature,) even

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should the latter begin with his scrutiny before his after dinner libations made him less sharp.

Affairs appeared to be rapidly approximating towards a conflict in No. 5, by the prisoners refusing to go out when ordered, for the purpose of a more thorough search; and the fear of the more orderly portion were nowise lessened, when a body of fifty or sixty soldiers were marched in, with commands to drive all out to a man, at the point of the bayonet. An order easily issued, but difficult to be carried into execution; for wherever a squad of men could be seen together, a push was made at them by the soldiers, who followed them through the long allies, up one flight of stairs, only to drive down the other, till the squad dwindled into nothingness, after many had displayed their agility in the chase, before the soldiers' front, by throwing somersets, aping the frog in his graceful leaps, or using his companion's shoulders as a vehicle to help him forward in his race, having ample time to cheer on the others, between thumping the ribs of his Rozinante, and daring the soldier officer to bet who would first tire, the rider, the ridden, or those in chase. But while this crowd was dispersing, a much larger had formed in the soldiers' rear, which proved far more annoying, by their whooping, yelling, bleating, and cutting every ridiculous figure devils in human shape could imagine. Instead of the soldiers' work being done after dispersing the first body, they had now to change fronts, and retrace the same ground their victory had so lately brought them over, and with the like success. This racing back

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and forth, up and down, to and fro, the turnkey foresaw would end where it began, only that the soldiers would become too much blown to stand guard the coming night, and forthwith sounded a parley. He stated to Capt. Shortland, that the prisoners were mostly seamen, with seamen's propensities and prejudices, who would not be driven by soldiers; but if he were permitted to take the usual course of clearing the prison, he would answer for it that they should go out quietly. Shortland withdrew his red-coats, the turnkey blew his horn, told the prisoners his wishes, and in twenty minutes not a man could be seen within the building. Had a certain stone been raised, the lost would have been discovered, coiled in a space that would not hold a tithe of the now well-fed proportions of mine host of the Baltimore House. No sooner did Shortland see that the prisoners paid more respect to the turnkey's requests, than they had to his threats and commands, backed by his company of red-coats, than he furiously swore that they should return to the inside of the building, therein be locked close, and kept without water, till they consented to give the man up. To do without water the prisoners knew was impossible; to give up the man was not only backing out, but it would be breaking a pledge revolting to their feelings; and to avoid the disagreeable result of the captain's threatenings, was only for them to remain outside where the water was, and let the choleric captain find and take his man when and where he could.

As the crowd wheeled round at a rapid pace to pass

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between buildings Nos. 5 and 6, the prisoners being in a solid body of from one to two thousand, and not more than ten paces in advance of the presented muskets of the soldiers, a boy caught up a stone, turned, and threw it directly at Shortland's head, with all the force his young strength could give it. The stone passed as near the cheek of Shortland as possible without grazing it. He halted his men instanter, and quick as thought gave the word to fire, as distinctly as the extremely agitated state of his mind would admit. There stood within twelve paces, the whole of that solid body, which the soldiers were trying to scatter, and who now were faced about, looking unconcernedly upon the presented muskets of those that had the word to fire. The officer in command of the company stepped forward, as soon as he heard the word given out, waved the muskets up with his unsheathed sword, with as much military suavity of deportment and coolness of action, as though he was on drill duty under the eye of the Prince Regent. Shortland threw up his extended arm and cane, to give greater force to the command, and said as loud as he could screech, "Fire! you rascals!" The officer again threw himself immediately before his line, who had dropped their muskets once more to the level of their cheeks, and with the authoritative. "As you were!" prevented the effusion of blood, that must have followed the carnage of so deadly an aim, at so near a compact body, as was standing in their front. Shortland saw that his orders were not obeyed, turned his eyes an instant to the

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ground, said not a word, but left the yard alone, and was shortly afterwards followed by the company of soldiers, without being at all molested by the crowd; nor did the latter display any noisy mirth, or show the least disrespect at the former, within hearing, while passing out. Had the command to fire been obeyed, it must have killed hundreds, yet there would have been enough remaining to have riven the hearts from their murderers, before reloading, if no better weapons offered than the teeth of the aggrieved.

There was not the least doubt, but from Shortland's manner at the above scene in the yard, that his mind was made up to be revenged upon the prisoners at the first opportunity, and at the slightest infringement of the prison regulations; and that period, those of more reflective minds saw, could not be far distant, with the present excitement the prisoners were laboring under, which was brought about by various causes. The principal of these were the withholding of tobacco money, the men being retained in prison after peace was proclaimed, the stoppage of the market, and the harsh treatment of being driven about like condemned criminals, at the point of the bayonet, when they would and did willingly submit to such restrictive regulations as the civil authorities prescribed. A few days after these events, the friends of Hays met to commemorate the successful manner they had frustrated the intentions of Shortland of securing his stray prisoner. After the toasts had all been expended, the escaped, thinking still his disguise was sufficient to deceive the jailor's scrutiny,

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became daring, ventured into the yard, was recognized and apprehended. He was sent back to the cachet, but suffered a nominal punishment of only ten days' confinement; after which he was liberated, and soon left the prisons.

From this time, eight or ten days previous to the massacre, the prisoners were not interfered with or molested, but were allowed to pursue their own course, which made many believe that those who had the command were afraid to carry any harsh measure into effect. This caused the unruly to be more arrogant, and they showed less willingness to submit to the rules under which they were to be governed, than before any misunderstanding had taken place between themselves and the authorities of the depot. With one of better temper than Shortland, all collision might easily have been avoided, without endangering his standing as a military jailor, or lessening his renown, by not shedding the blood of unarmed prisoners of war.

Notice came on the third of April, that, in future, half the quantity of hard biscuit would be given to the prisoners in lieu of the hard bread they had been receiving. The prisoners were asked in the usual way by the crier, whether they were willing to receive three fourths of a pound of hard stale biscuit, instead of the pound and a half of fresh bread they had been accustomed to receive, merely to enable the contractor to be rid of an unsaleable article. The answer was unanimously, "No! no! never!" Orders were given to the cooks to demand such bread as they had always receiv-

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ed, on the following morning, and refuse the biscuit. This was strictly adhered to. Many of the prisoners showed symptoms of riot, especially those who had only their rations to subsist on, and their numbers increased as the day advanced, which the officer on duty saw, as was evident by his doubling the guard in the market square, the principal scene of noise and disorder during market hours. At eight o'clock at night, the Rough Allies had congregated about the market to the number of hundreds, when they, at their watchword, "kews," by their united strength levelled the gate to the ground, leaving a free passage through the square to the store house above. Their cry was, "bread! bread! give us our bread!" The garrison were alarmed, the officers came out, begged them to be peaceable, that they should have their bread as soon as it could be obtained, and if possible during the night. The prisoners saw the advantage they had gained (by those in command exhibiting a fear or panic beyond their control) and would not leave the square, but remained for the most part quiet, with the exception of an occasional whoop, yell, or other noisy vociferation, as ever emanates from a disorderly crowd which has in any way gained its point.

At ten o'clock the bread was given to the cooks as usual, from them distributed to the different messes throughout the prisons, and all retired quietly to rest, after being locked up as heretofore. Had the officer in command ordered his men to keep back the rioters at all hazard, as they were forcing their way through the gate,

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he would have been perfectly justified, for it lay within the bounds of his duty; but he relied upon the strength of those ponderous barriers, which gave way ere he supposed an effort was in agitation to remove them, and before he could rally the soldiers, the square was filled with a half-famished, angry, overwhelming crowd, which it would have been dangerous in him to attempt to drive back with the force at hand, although amply sufficient to hold in check, before gaining the square. The sixth of April was unusually pleasant, a circumstance so seldom that most of the prisoners were enjoying themselves out of doors, as best they could; a number were playing ball against the cross wall, dividing the barrack yard from that of No. 7. Among this party were four who had been captured when on boat duty, and belonging to Commodore Chauncey's ship Superior, on Lake Ontario. They were no ways riotous, but were known throughout the prison for being, in seamen's phrase, "ready dogs and ripe for fun." In the course of the play, the ball was often thrown by accident over the wall, in the barrack yard, and for some time was as often thrown back by the sentry on the other side, till he through sulkiness refused to toss it again to the players. They tried to persuade him to give it to them, as it was the only one they had, it affording them amusement and recreation, and lessened the tediousness of their captivity. The only answer they could get from the sulky sentinel, was to "Come and take it." This they considered as daring them to do it; and "Chauncey's Tigers never took a stump;" at it they

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went, without implements, or any thing except what they could pick up in the yard, and in full view of the sentries upon the walls near by. No notice of these doings was apparently taken by the officers of the garrison; but individuals from the prison of No. 5 begged them to desist, saying they were bringing not only themselves but others into trouble; as the innocent must suffer, if a conflict was brought on, by their indulging in this fool-hardy frolic. Those engaged at the mischief, thought it too good a joke to leave unfinished, and kept busily at their digging, till the hole was sufficiently large to allow a man to pass through. The firing now commenced in the market square from a body of soldiers headed by Shortland in person, several rods from the place where the hole was made, and not the least endangering those who were the alleged cause of the massacre, nor was any one hurt within the range of the wall that was picked. An increased number of soldiers now first showed themselves upon the walls, overlooking the whole, formed into squads, who kept up a constant firing, began the moment the reports were heard from the square, and continued as long as any prisoners were in sight. When the gate opened at the upper end of the market, to allow the soldiers to enter, the prisoners at the opposite end supposed them to be none but the relief, having nothing in their appearance to indicate any other object, except being in greater numbers than usual, making their appearance the moment the alarm bell was rung, and accompanied by Shortland. Neither were the prisoners undeceived in

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the character or meaning of this body, until they formed a close front, and while at a double quick step, came to a charge at so close a proximity, that those in front found it impossible to retreat sufficiently rapid, to keep clear of the bayonets, by the others in the rear standing their ground, not seeing the manœuvre of the soldiers, and consequently knew of no approaching danger, till Shortland gave the word to fire. So little did this body of prisoners suppose they were in peril, that one of the heroes of this narrative, the noble boatswain, was carelessly looking through the gratings, a little apart from the main body, nor dreamed his person was in jeopardy, till the squad of soldiers approached, one pointed his musket downwards, within a foot of his knee, and blew all below to a jelly, splintering and mangling the thigh above in a horrible manner, almost beyond the hope of cure, till the third amputation alone staid mortification.

The whole number injured never can be ascertained, as the report came from the hospital, immediately under the direction of Shortland; according to the report which was made out, there were five killed, and thirty-nine wounded — two dying before or immediately after their dressings, while the one that came from the committee of the prisoners, since published, made the killed seven, and the wounded fifty-six. Thus ended one of the most disgraceful and inhuman massacres, that was ever perpetrated by any civilized nation, and will for ever remain an eternal blot on the escutcheon of British history.

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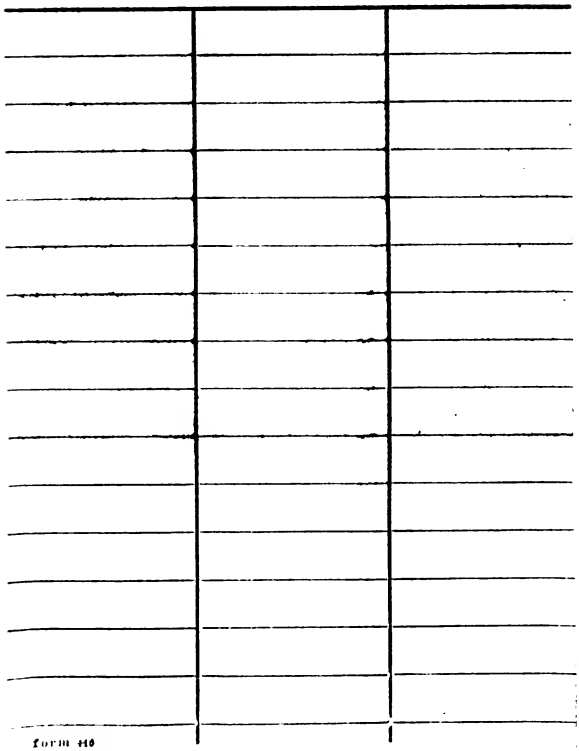

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